



Witch

Will

Irma

Tarance

Cornelia

Hay Lin

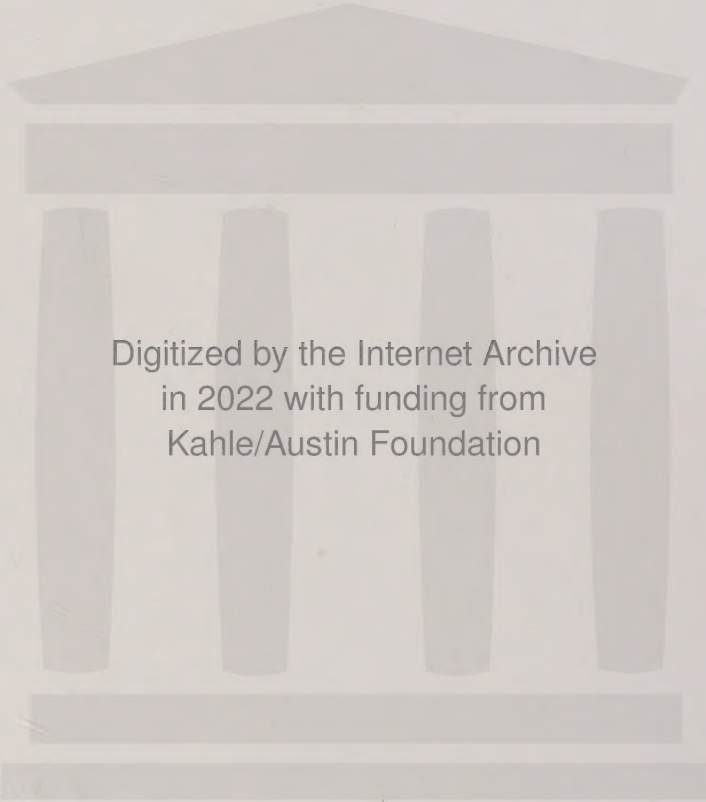
Part 1: The Twelve Portals

Volume 3



NOVEL

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL



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Witch

Will Irma Taranee Cornelia Hay Lin

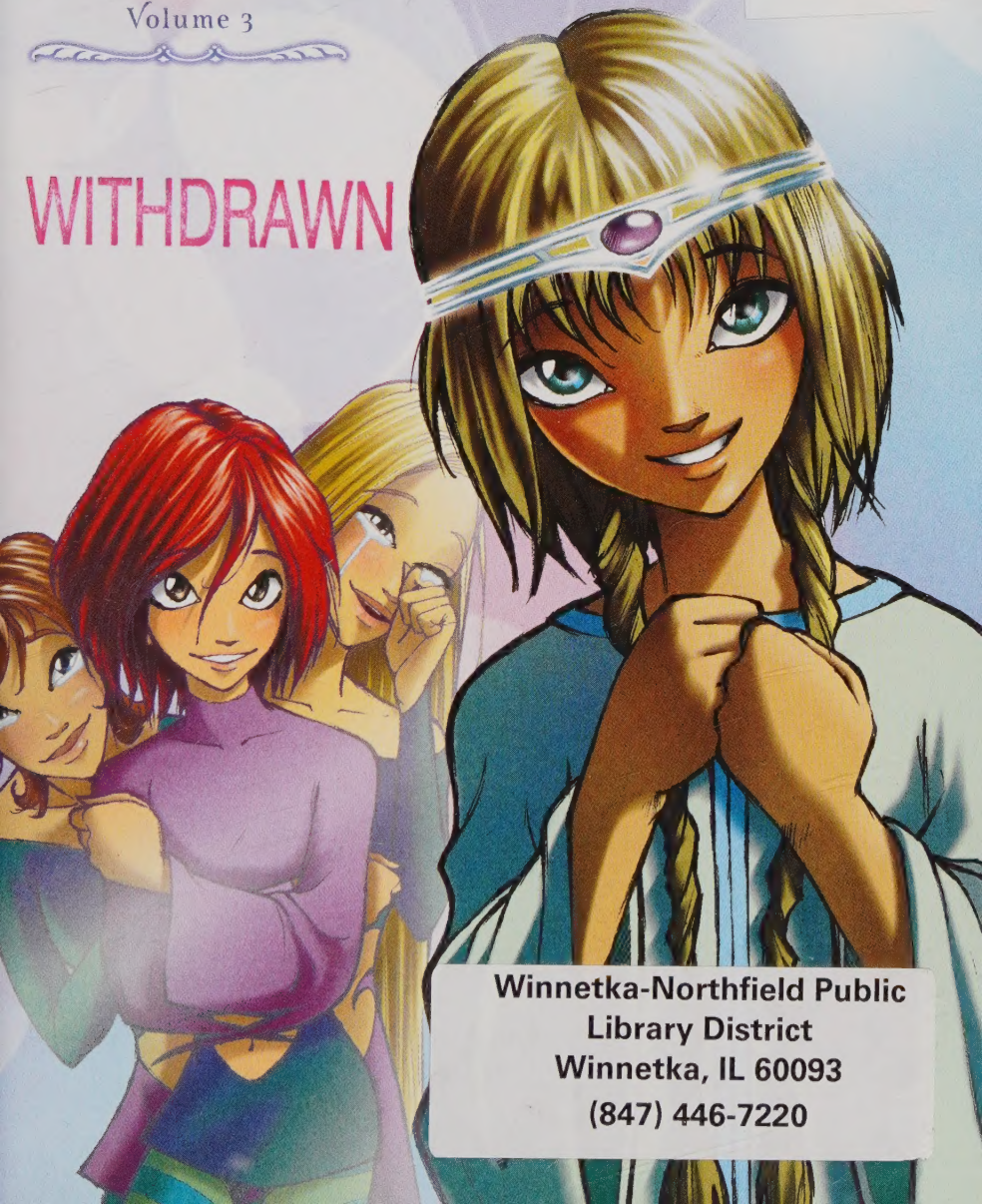


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JUNE 2020

Part 1. The Twelve Portals
Volume 3

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Witch

Will Irma Taranea Cornelia Hay Lin

Part I. The Twelve Portals
Volume 3

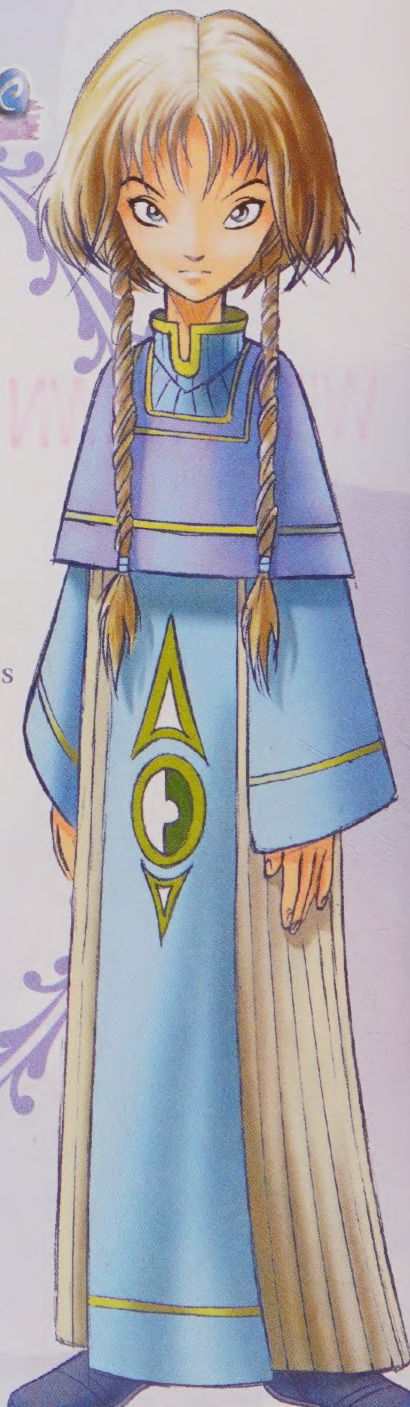
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“That’s how Xin Jing, the Nymph,
soared above the world...”



THE FOUR DRAGONS



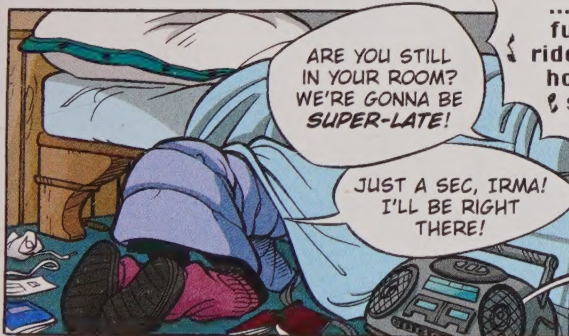
JINGLE BELLS...



JINGLE BELLS...

JINGLE
ALL THE WAY...

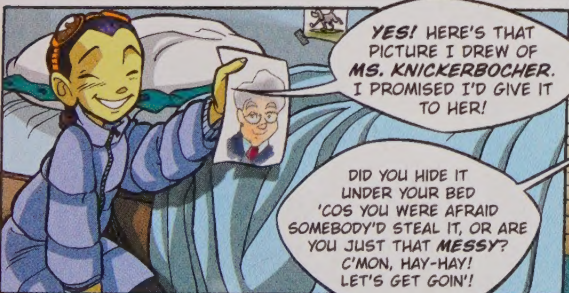
I'M COMING!



ARE YOU STILL
IN YOUR ROOM?
WE'RE GONNA BE
SUPER-LATE!

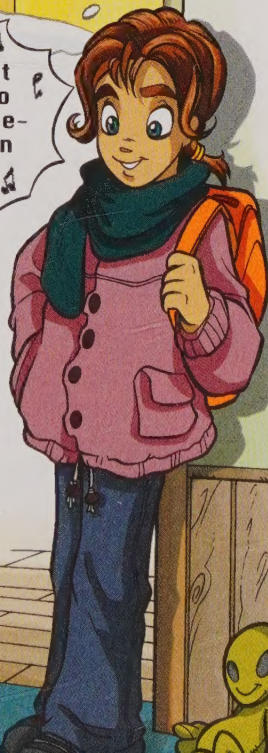
JUST A SEC, IRMA!
I'LL BE RIGHT
THERE!

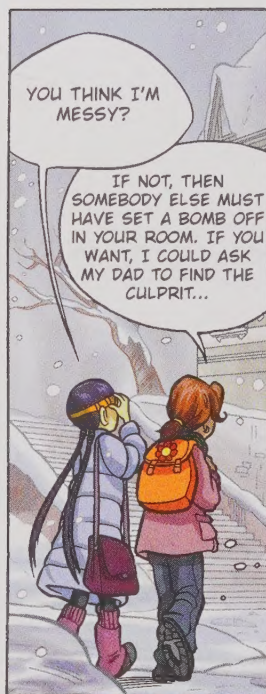
...Oh, what
fun it is to
ride in a one-
horse open
sleigh...



YES! HERE'S THAT
PICTURE I DREW OF
MS. KNICKERBOCHER.
I PROMISED I'D GIVE IT
TO HER!

DID YOU HIDE IT
UNDER YOUR BED
'COS YOU WERE AFRAID
SOMEBODY'D STEAL IT, OR ARE
YOU JUST THAT **MESSY?**
C'MON, HAY-HAY!
LET'S GET GOIN'!





YOU THINK I'M MESSY?

IF NOT, THEN SOMEBODY ELSE MUST HAVE SET A BOMB OFF IN YOUR ROOM. IF YOU WANT, I COULD ASK MY DAD TO FIND THE CULPRIT...



WE WASTED HALF AN HOUR HUNTING DOWN YOUR MASTERPIECE! IF WE'RE LATE, I'M GONNA BE SO MAD!

WE STILL HAVE TIME.



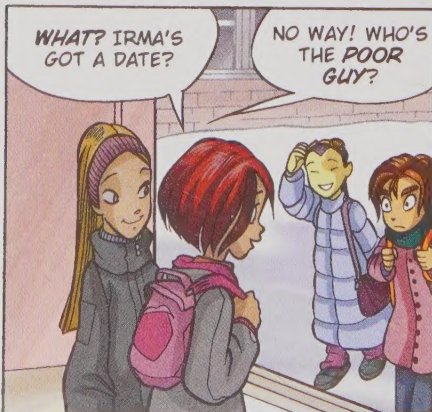
SINCE WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN IN A RUSH TO GET TO SCHOOL? WE'LL BE THERE EARLY, Y'KNOW.

SO WHAT? WE'RE USUALLY LATE. I JUST WANT TO MAKE UP FOR THAT.



YOU'RE HIDING SOMETHING! YOU HAVE A DATE, DON'T YOU? ADMIT IT!

QUIET DOWN, FER CRYIN' OUT LOUD!

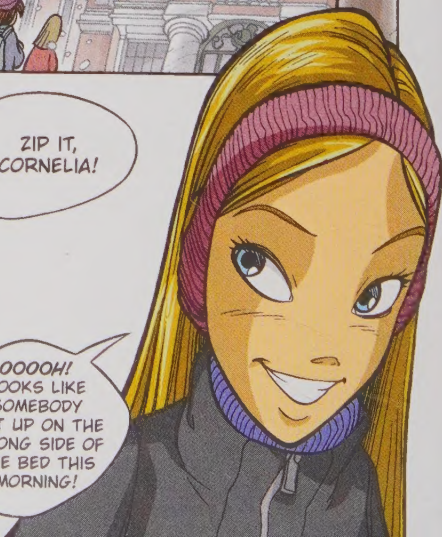


WHATT? IRMA'S GOT A DATE?

NO WAY! WHO'S THE POOR GUY?

ZIP IT, CORNELIA!

OOOOH! LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY GOT UP ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE BED THIS MORNING!





HEY, HOT STUFF!
YOU'RE RIGHT ON TIME
TODAY! YOU'VE NEVER
BEEN THIS PUNCTUAL
BEFORE!



Ugh!
My life's over.



M-MARTIN?
IRMA'S DATING
MARTIN? MAYBE MY
EYES ARE GOING
BAD. I MUST BE
HALLUCINATING.
THERE'S NO WAY!



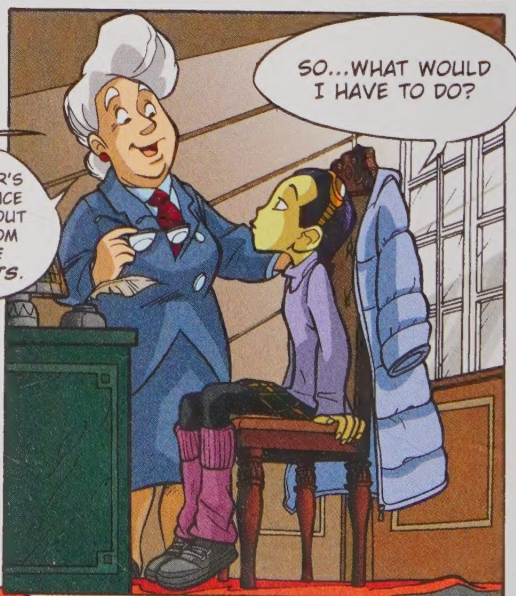
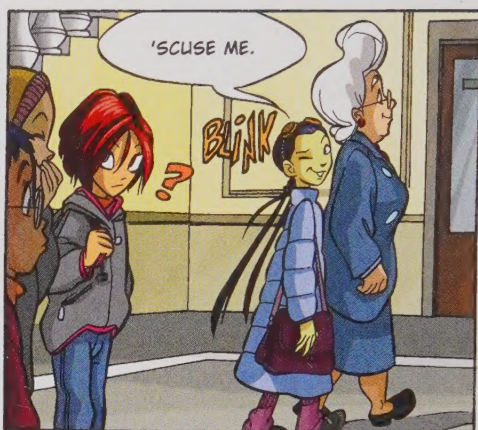
THEY'RE NOT DATING. MARTIN
HELPS HER STUDY FRENCH
BEFORE CLASS.

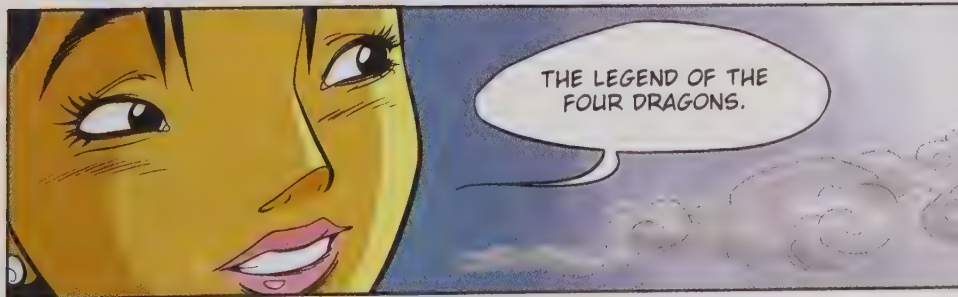
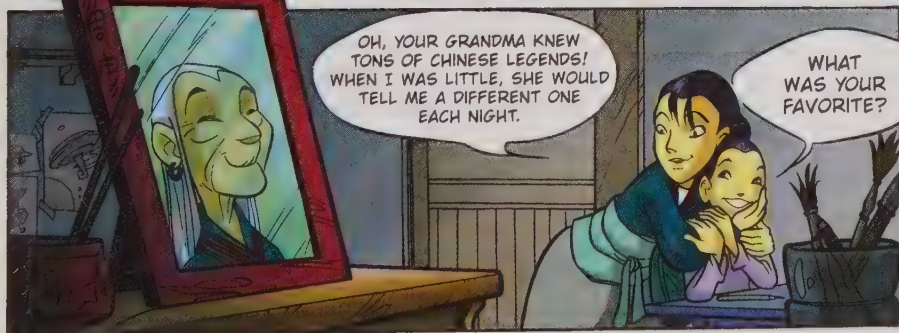
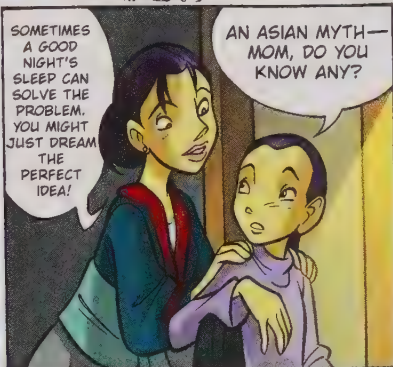
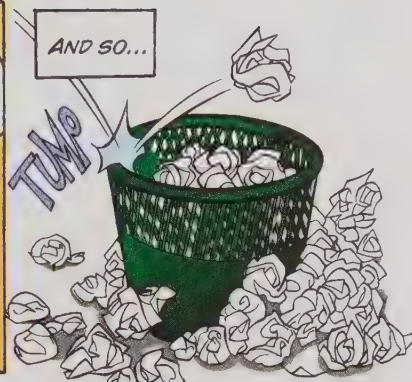
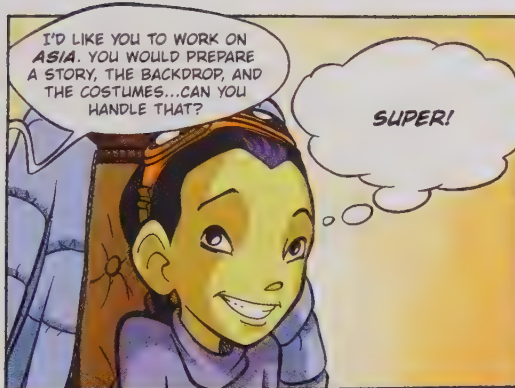
IRMA'S JUST WORRIED
ABOUT HER GRADES.
TO GET ENOUGH CREDIT,
SHE HAS TO PERFORM IN
THE CHRISTMAS
SHOW...

...BUT TO DO THAT,
SHE NEEDS TO PASS
HER NEXT FRENCH
TEST!

HA-HA-HA!
NOW I GET IT!

MISS HAY LIN!





YES! THE FOUR DRAGONS!

"IN THE SKY..."

"TIME WAS YOUNG THEN.

GAAROOOWWWW

"THERE WERE NO RIVERS OR
LAKES...JUST THE GREAT
EASTERN SEA.

WOOSH

"THE DRAGONS PLAYED
IN THE AIR.

"THE BRAVEST WERE THE GREAT
DRAGON, THE YELLOW DRAGON...



"...THE BLACK DRAGON,
AND THE PEARL DRAGON.



"BUT ONE SAD DAY,
A PRAYER ROSE...

OUR POWERFUL
ANCESTORS, PLEASE
HELP US!

"...CARRIED BY THE
INCENSE'S SMOKE.

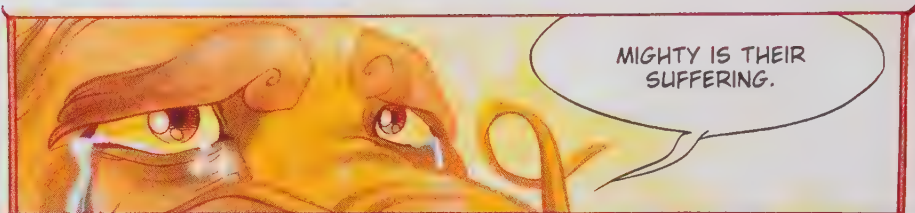
"THE YELLOW DRAGON, THE ONE WHO MOST
LOVED THE EARTH, WENT DOWN TO SEE
WHAT WAS GOING ON.

MAY THE SKIES OPEN!
MAY THE RAIN BLESS OUR
FIELDS! THIS WE BEG FOR!
THIS WE HOPE FOR!

POOR
PEOPLE!

THE DROUGHT
IS DESTROYING
THEIR CROPS!

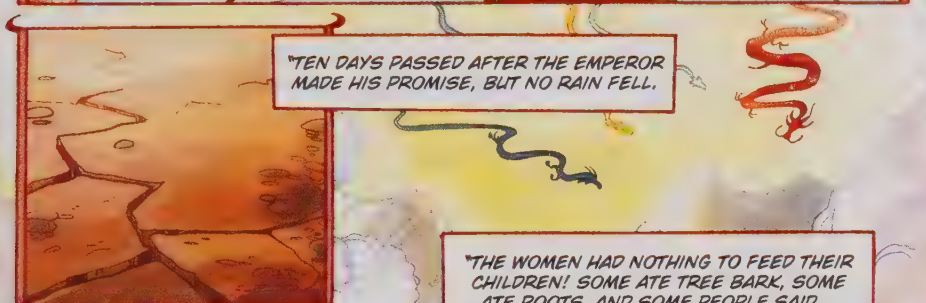
THEIR SUPPLIES WILL
SOON RUN OUT, AND
THAT WILL BE THE END
FOR THEM.



12

"YET THEY RECEIVED NO WELCOME.

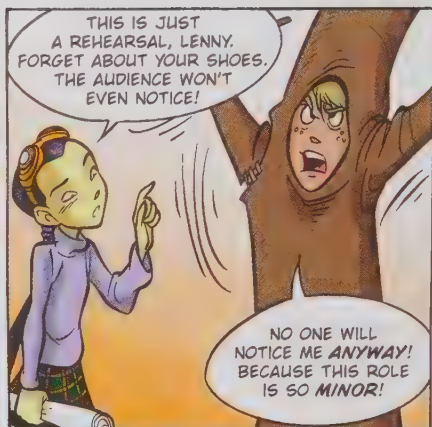






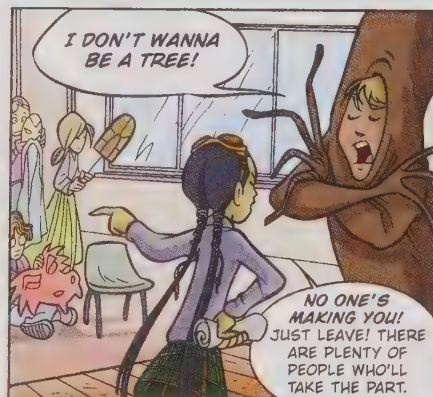
WHAT IS IT THIS TIME?

IF HE LIFTS UP MY ROOTS, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO SEE MY SHOES!



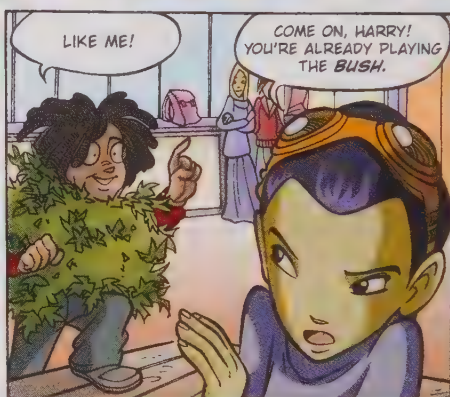
THIS IS JUST A REHEARSAL, LENNY. FORGET ABOUT YOUR SHOES. THE AUDIENCE WON'T EVEN NOTICE!

NO ONE WILL NOTICE ME *ANYWAY!* BECAUSE THIS ROLE IS SO *MINOR!*



I DON'T WANNA BE A TREE!

NO ONE'S MAKING YOU! JUST LEAVE! THERE ARE PLENTY OF PEOPLE WHO'LL TAKE THE PART.



LIKE ME!

COME ON, HARRY! YOU'RE ALREADY PLAYING THE *BUSH*.



WOW. HAY LIN'S SHOWING SOME REAL GUTS!

IT'S TOUGH TO MAKE EVERYONE IN A SCHOOL PLAY GET ALONG!

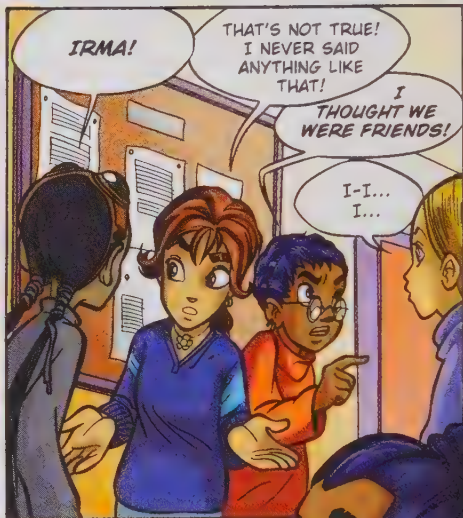


THE TRUTH IS, YOUR STORY'S DUMB!

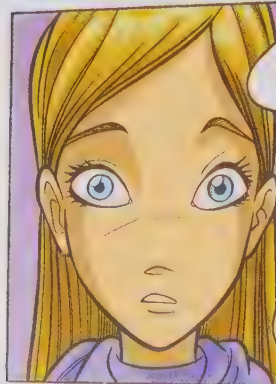
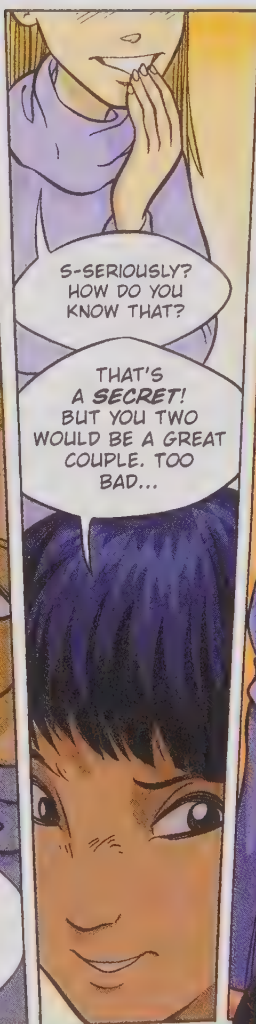


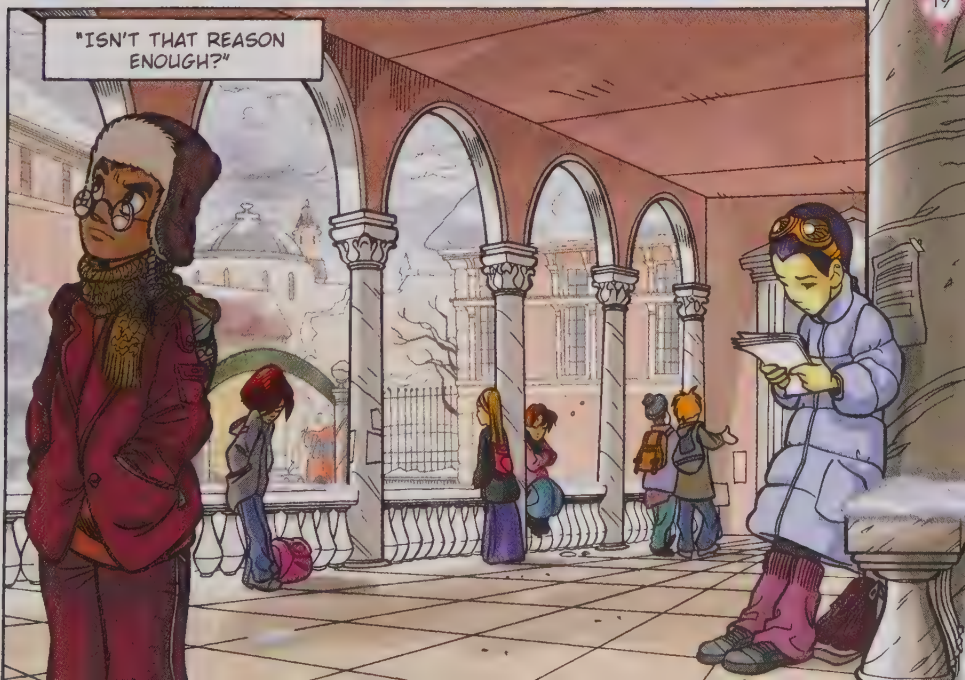
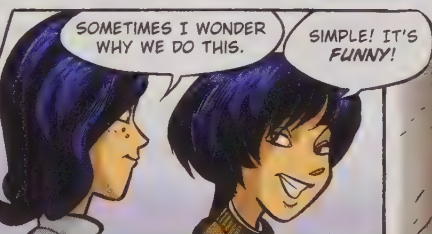
HMMM, HOW INTERESTING.

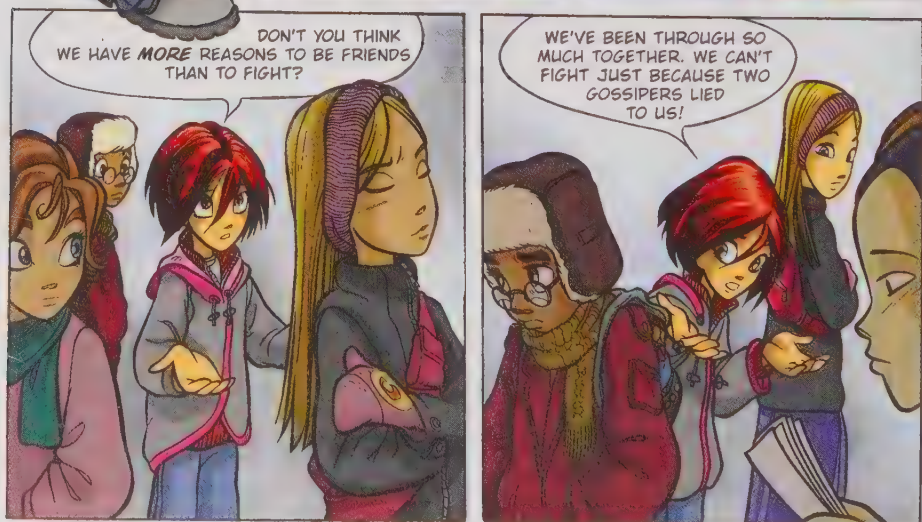
LOOKS LIKE A STORM'S BREWING!











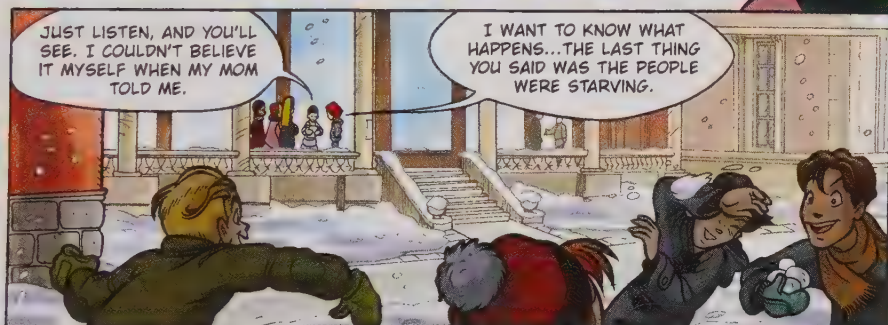


WILL'S RIGHT!
I WANTED THE
PLAY TO BE A
SURPRISE!



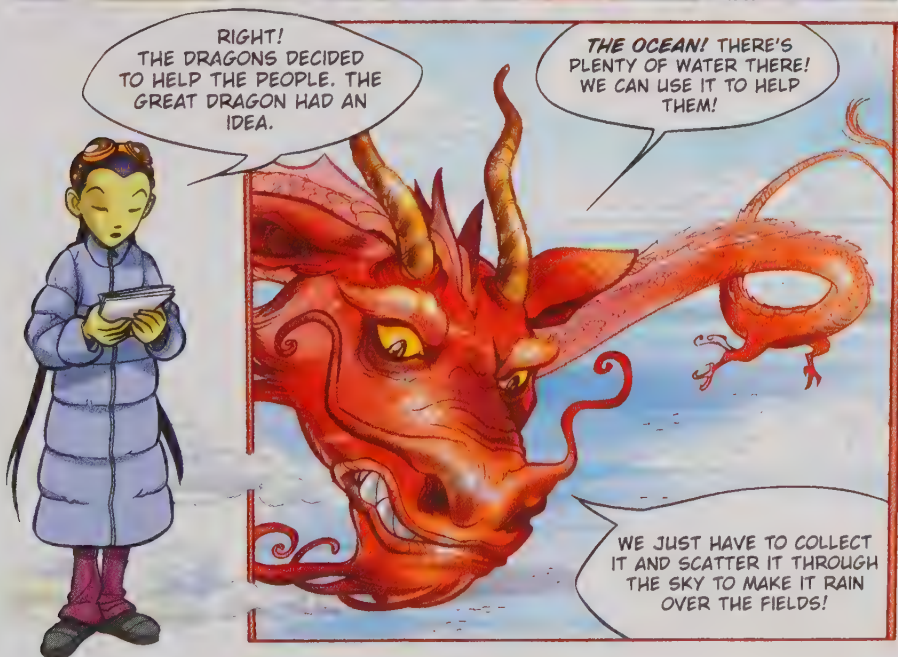
BUT MAYBE IT'S TIME
TO TELL YOU ALL HOW
THE FOUR DRAGONS'
STORY ENDS.

OKAY, BUT WHY
WOULD WE CARE
NOW?



JUST LISTEN, AND YOU'LL
SEE. I COULDN'T BELIEVE
IT MYSELF WHEN MY MOM
TOLD ME.

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT
HAPPENS...THE LAST THING
YOU SAID WAS THE PEOPLE
WERE STARVING.



RIGHT!
THE DRAGONS DECIDED
TO HELP THE PEOPLE. THE
GREAT DRAGON HAD AN
IDEA.

THE OCEAN! THERE'S
PLENTY OF WATER THERE!
WE CAN USE IT TO HELP
THEM!

WE JUST HAVE TO COLLECT
IT AND SCATTER IT THROUGH
THE SKY TO MAKE IT RAIN
OVER THE FIELDS!

"AND THAT'S WHAT THE FOUR
DRAGONS DID HUNDREDS
OF TIMES. THE DESPERATE
PEOPLE COULDN'T BELIEVE
THEIR EYES.

RAIN!
IT'S RAINING!

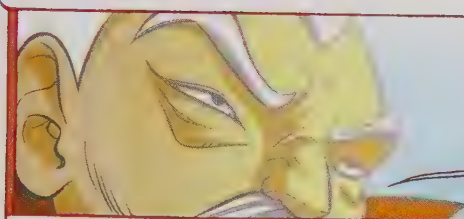
"BUT THE JADE EMPEROR WASN'T
PLEASED WITH SUCH WONDERS.
HIS WRATH GREW!"

GET THEM!
BRING THEM TO ME
IMMEDIATELY!

THE DRAGONS WERE TAKEN
TO THE PALACE IN CHAINS.
THE EMPEROR HAD PREPARED
A TERRIBLE PUNISHMENT
...

IS THERE A PUNISHMENT
WORSE THAN HAVING TO
LISTEN TO THE STORY OF
THE FOUR DRAGONS?

YOU HAVE CHALLENGED
MY POWER, AND FOR THIS
YOU WILL BE PUNISHED!



I ORDER THE KING OF
THE PEAKS...

...TO PICK FOUR
MOUNTAINS AND LOCK THESE
DRAGONS AWAY—NEVER LET
THEM ESCAPE!

BUT WE ONLY
DID WHAT WAS
RIGHT!



THEIR WORDS DID NOT
MOVE THE EMPEROR,
AND SO HIS ORDER WAS
CARRIED OUT.



AS YOU WISHED,
YOUR MAJESTY!

THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS
TO THOSE WHO ANGER
ME!

NOW THEY
WILL NEVER BE
ABLE TO DO GOOD
EVER AGAIN!



"XIN JING, THE NYMPH AND MISTRESS OF COURAGE, COULD NOT TOLERATE THIS.

FLASH



XIN JING?

HER NAME MEANS HEART OF CRYSTAL, WILL!

"HER WORDS WERE SEVERE.

YOUR CRUELTY IS EQUALED ONLY BY YOUR ARROGANCE!

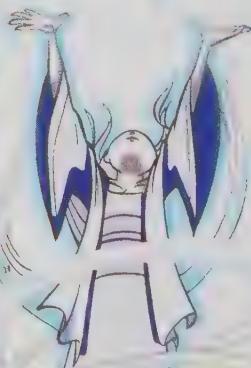
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, AS ALWAYS!

LOOK WELL AT THOSE MOUNTAINS, BECAUSE YOU'LL NEVER SEE THEM LIKE THIS, EVER AGAIN!

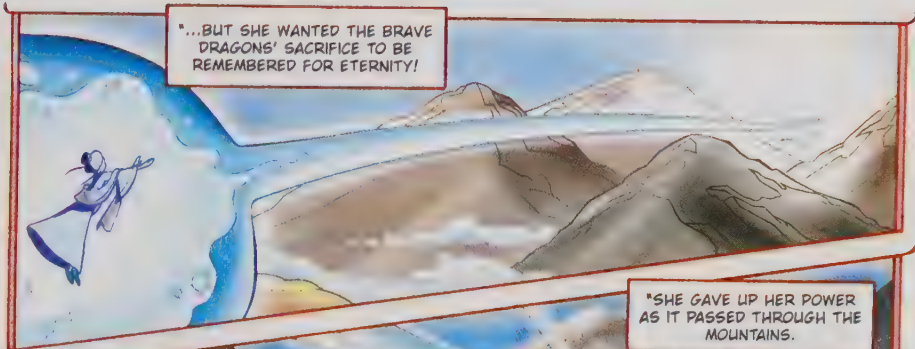
"THE NYMPH COULDN'T UNDO THE EMPEROR'S INJUSTICE...

YOUR VENGEANCE WILL BE YOUR OWN PUNISHMENT.

WHAT WILL YOU DO? YOU CAN'T OVERTURN MY DECREE.



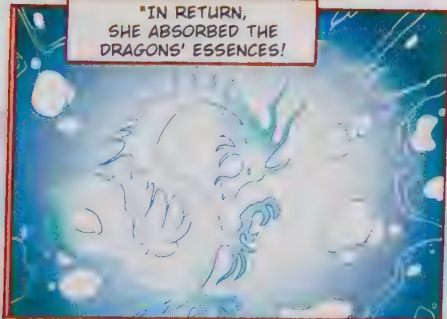
"...BUT SHE WANTED THE BRAVE
DRAGONS' SACRIFICE TO BE
REMEMBERED FOR ETERNITY!



"SHE GAVE UP HER POWER
AS IT PASSED THROUGH THE
MOUNTAINS.



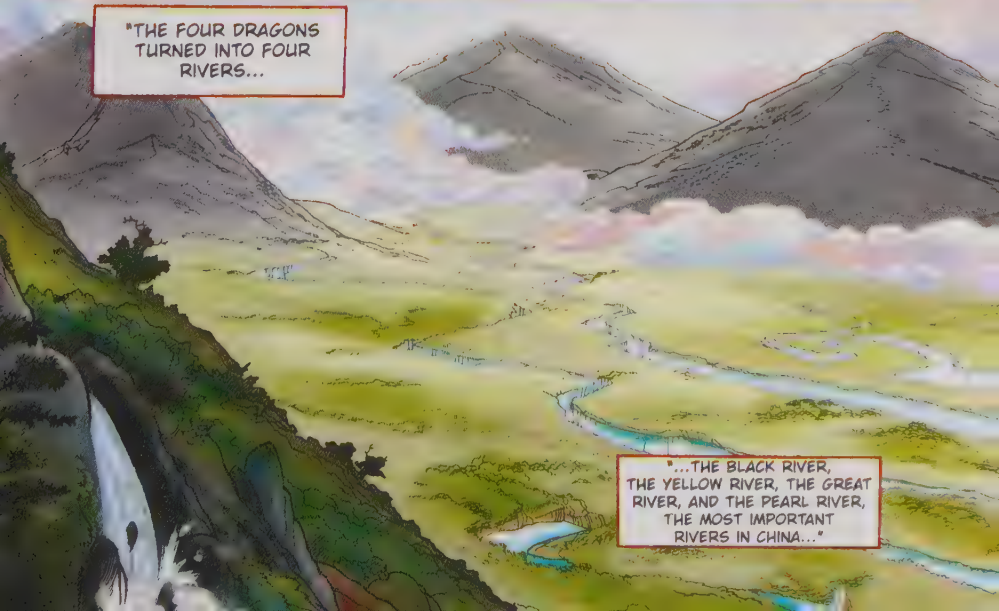
"IN RETURN,
SHE ABSORBED THE
DRAGONS' ESSENCES!



"AND SO, THE NYMPH XIN JING,
FOREVER BOUND TO THE DRAGONS,
FREELY SOARED ABOVE THE WORLD.



"THE FOUR DRAGONS
TURNED INTO FOUR
RIVERS...



"...THE BLACK RIVER,
THE YELLOW RIVER, THE GREAT
RIVER, AND THE PEARL RIVER,
THE MOST IMPORTANT
RIVERS IN CHINA..."

"AND ALL THAT WAS
LEFT OF THE NYMPH WAS
A CRYSTAL TALISMAN..."

...CONTAINING THE **ESSENCE** OF
THE FOUR DRAGONS...PLUS
HER OWN.

WOW!

DON'T YOU GET
IT? THE DRAGONS,
THE NYMPH...
THEY'RE US! THIS
LEGEND IS THE
ORIGIN OF OUR
POWERS!

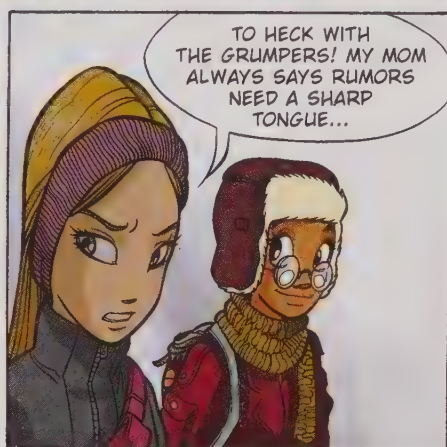
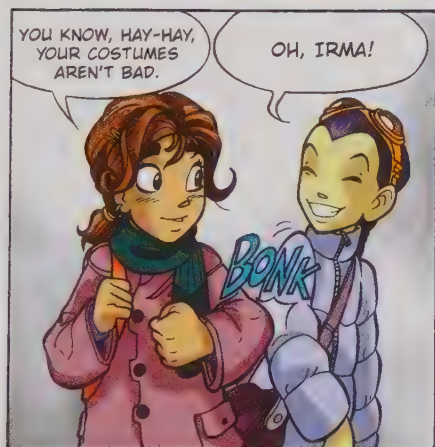
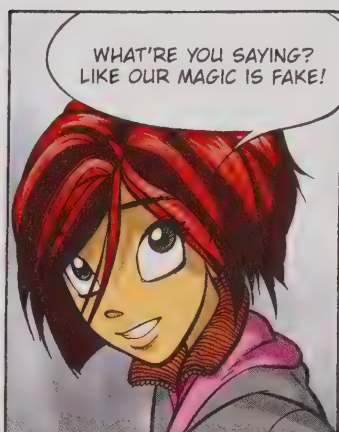
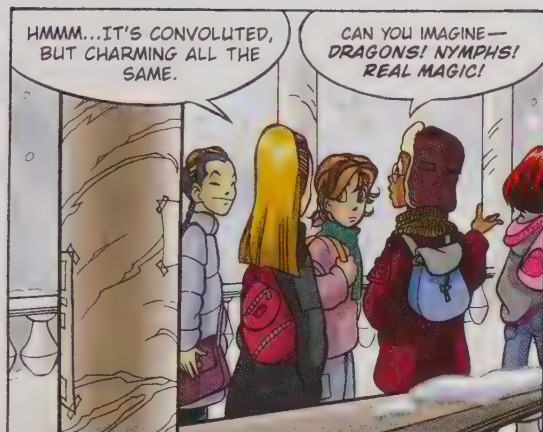
SO THE CRYSTAL
TALISMAN...

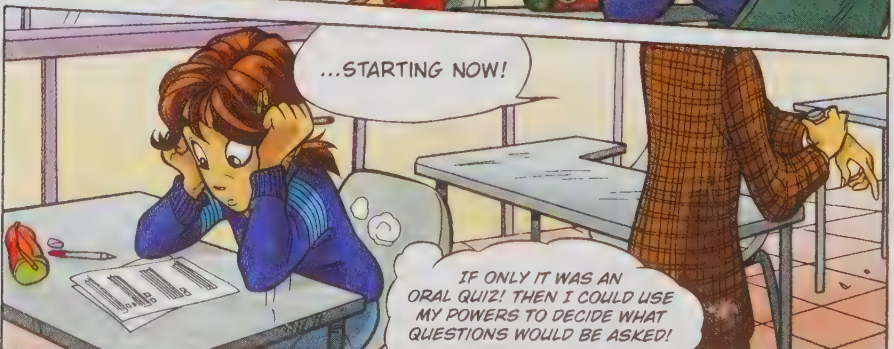
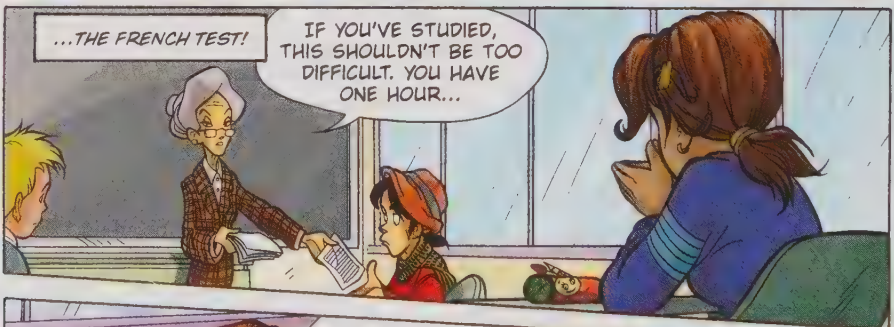
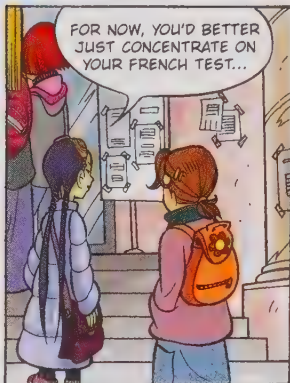
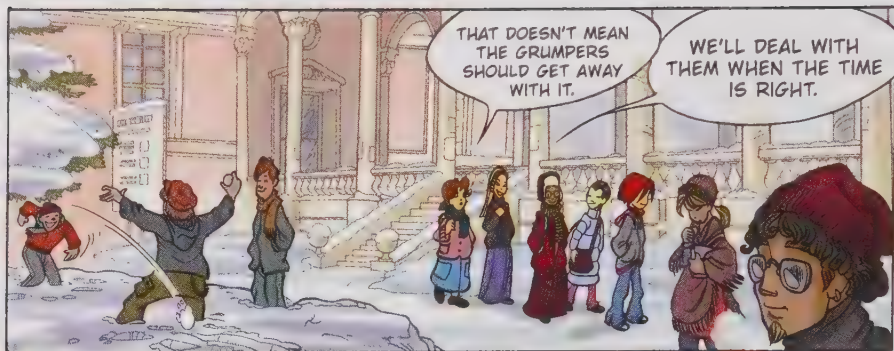
EXACTLY! IT'S THE HEART
OF KANDRAKAR! MY
GRANDMOTHER LOVED THIS
STORY. YOU KNOW WHY?

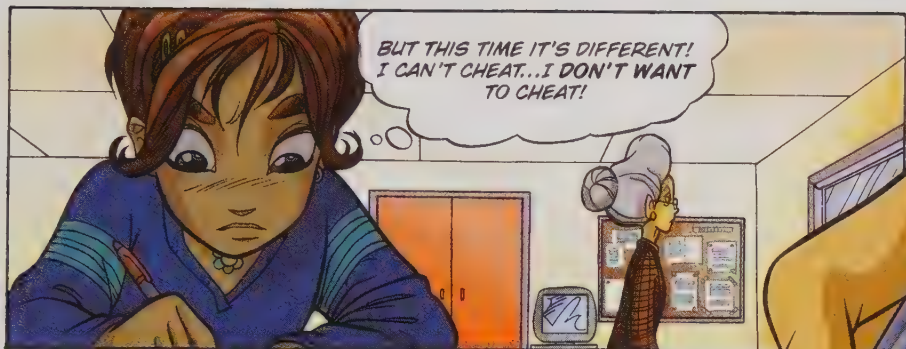
THE YELLOW DRAGON LOVED
THE **EARTH**. THE BLACK
DRAGON FLEW
THE HIGHEST!

THE GREAT DRAGON LOVED **WATER**,
AND THE PEARL DRAGON
CONTROLLED **FIRE**...

...AND THE
NYMPH, ALL BY
HERSELF, MADE THEIR
TRANSFORMATIONS
POSSIBLE.

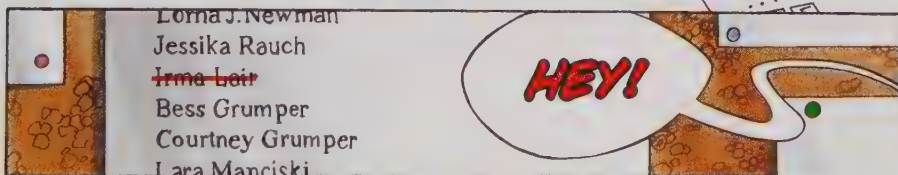


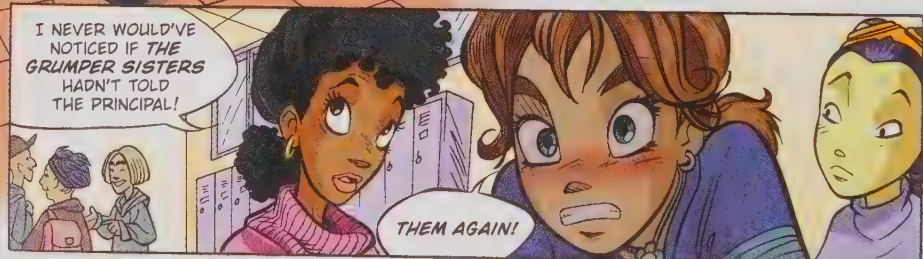
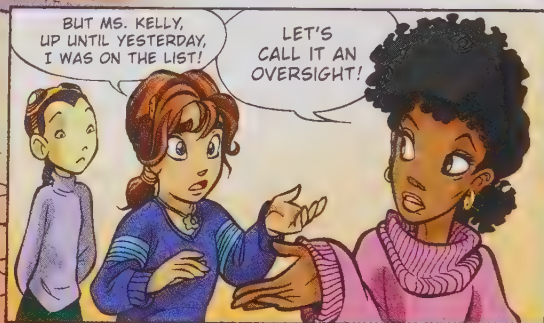
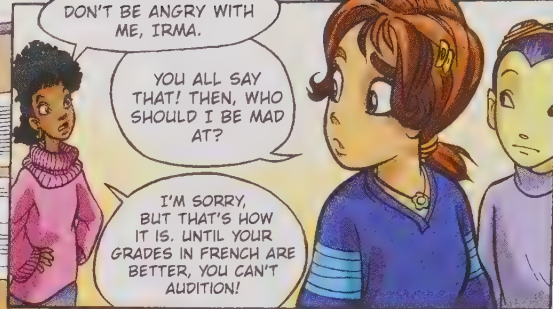


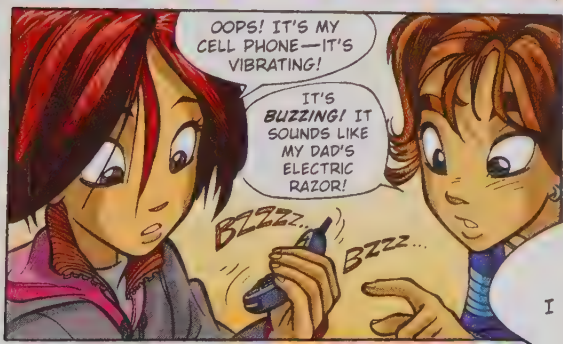
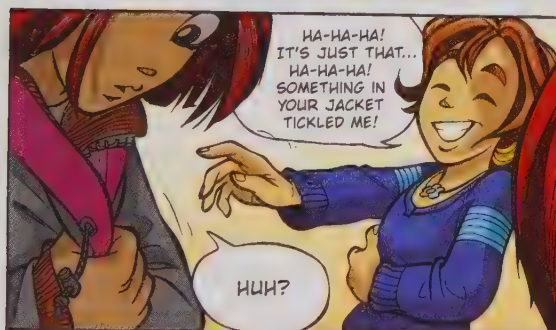
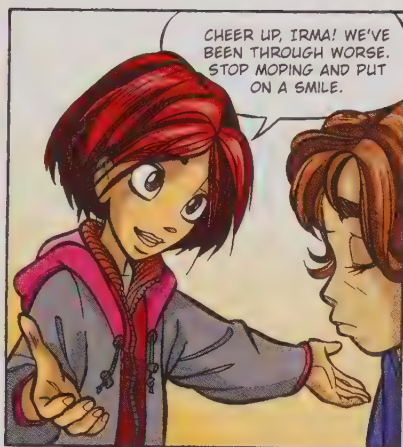
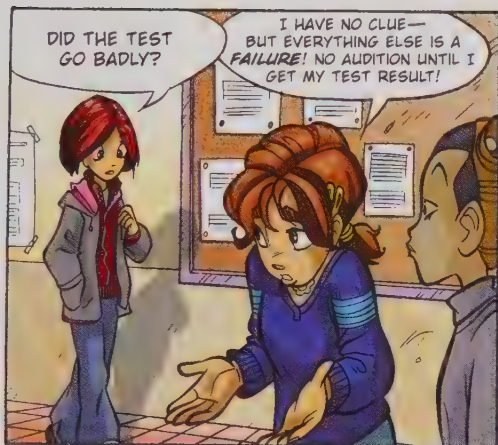


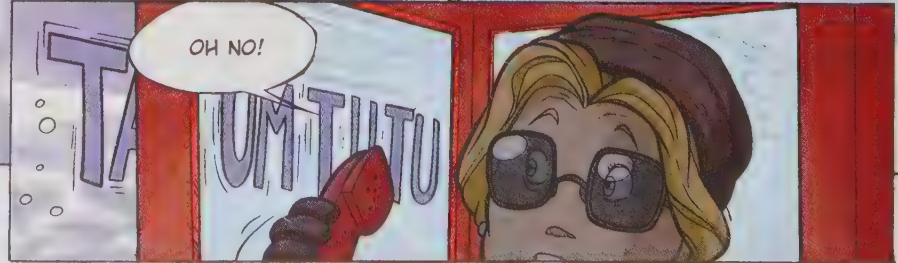
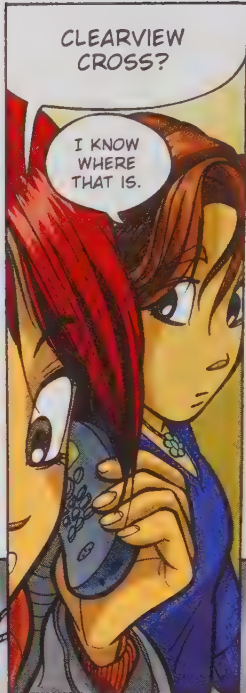
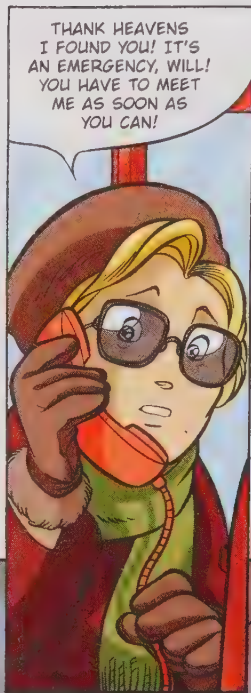
TRUE OR FALSE, RIGHT OR WRONG. MAGIC HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT! IT'S JUST ME AND THIS SHEET OF PAPER!

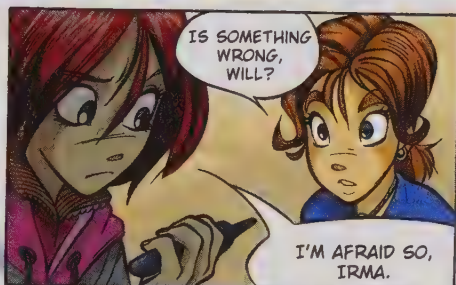
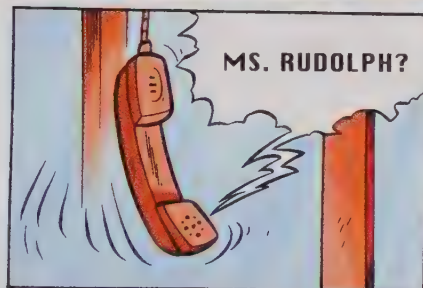
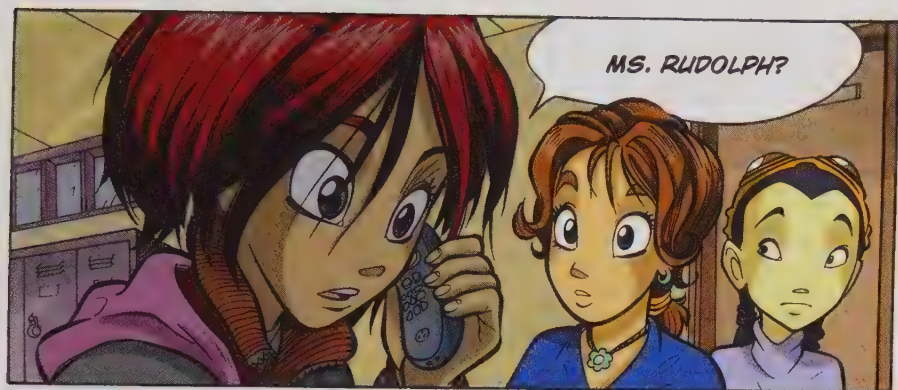
JUST ONE NAME TO CROSS OFF.











IN WEATHER LIKE THIS,
THE BEST THING TO DO WOULD
BE TO STAY AT HOME.

BUT JUST AN HOUR AGO,
THESE GIRLS RECEIVED
A CALL FOR HELP FROM
THEIR MATH TEACHER.

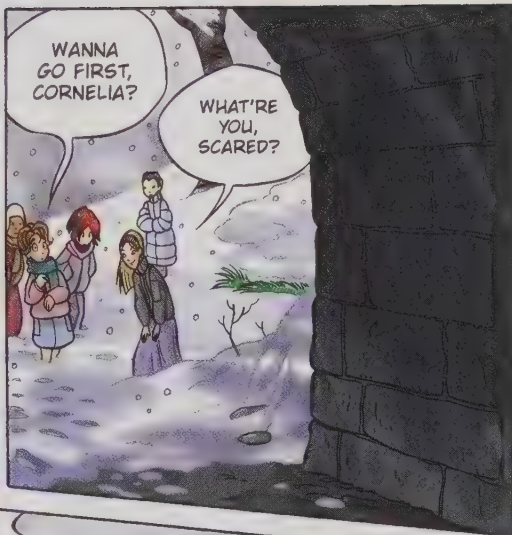
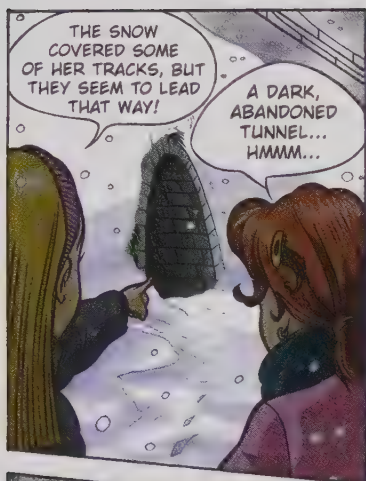
STUDENTS DON'T USUALLY RUN OFF
TO HELP TEACHERS, BUT IF YOU KNOW
W.I.T.C.H., THEN YOU KNOW THAT THIS SORT
OF THING IS LIKELY TO HAPPEN.

IT'S HER HAT.

BUT THESE
FOOTPRINTS AREN'T
HERS!

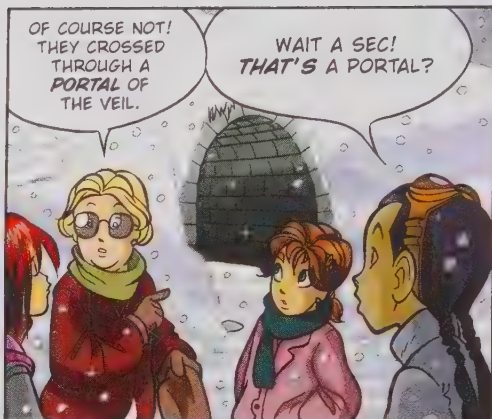
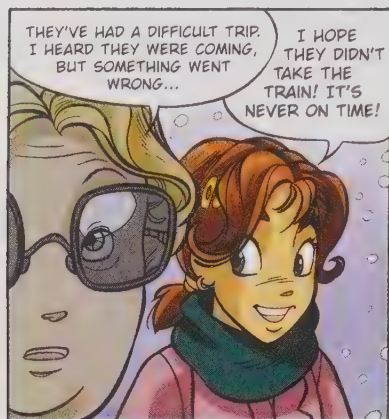
CLEARVIEW CROSS...
WE WERE SUPPOSED
TO MEET HER HERE, BUT
NOBODY'S AROUND.

SOMETHING
MUST'VE HAPPENED.
MS. RUDOLPH
WASN'T ALONE.

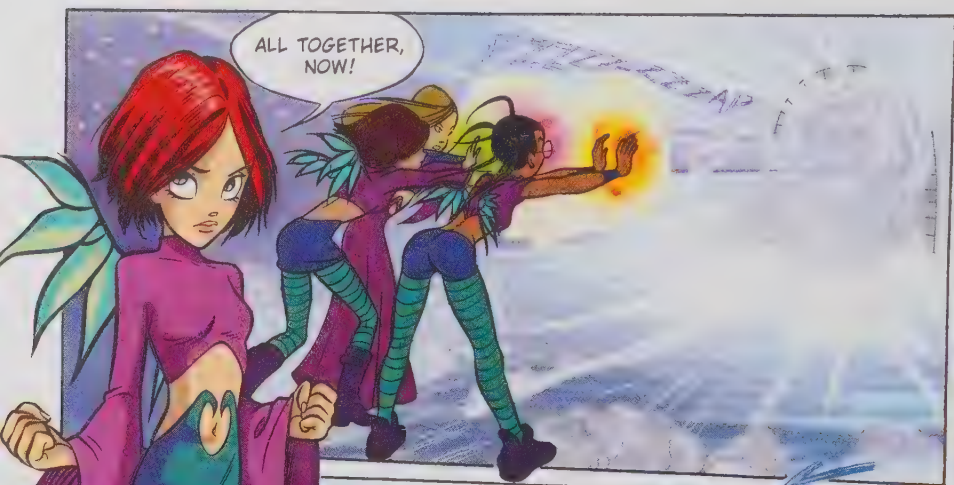


WE HID IN THE TUNNEL TO AVOID BEING SEEN. I'M SO HAPPY YOU'RE HERE!

IT WASN'T EASY FOR US TO GET HERE. THIS MUST BE YOURS.







ALL TOGETHER,
NOW!

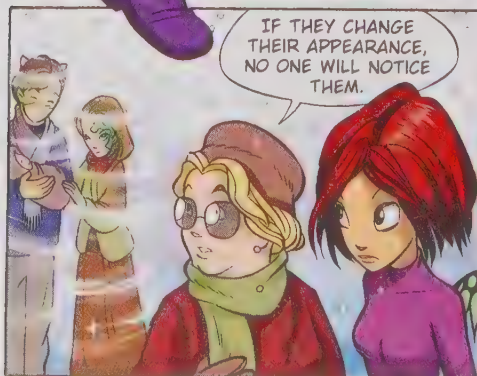


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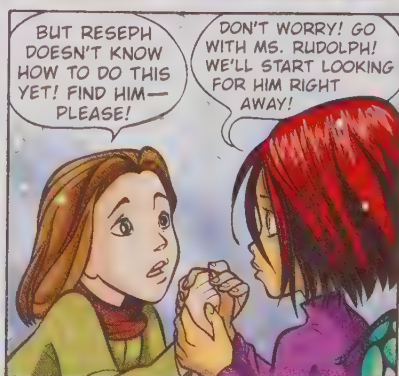


TAKE THESE PEOPLE
SOMEWHERE WARM AND
SAFE, MS. RUDOLPH!

WE'VE ALREADY
MADE PLANS. I'LL
HOST THEM AT MY
PLACE.

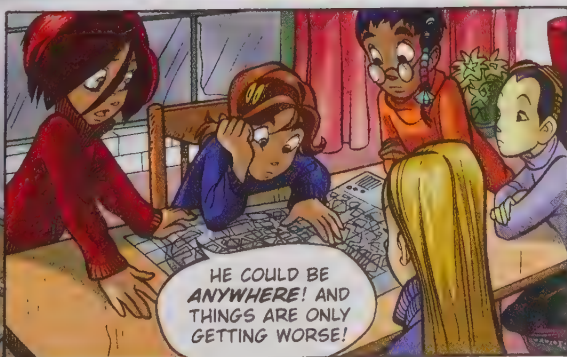
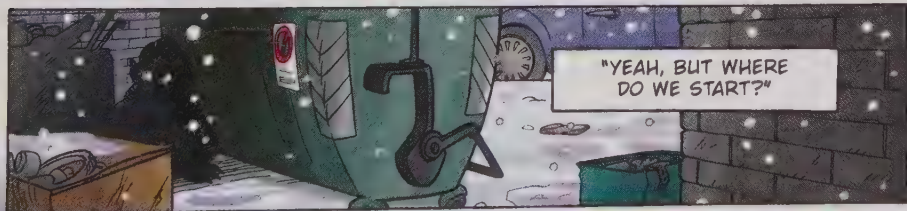
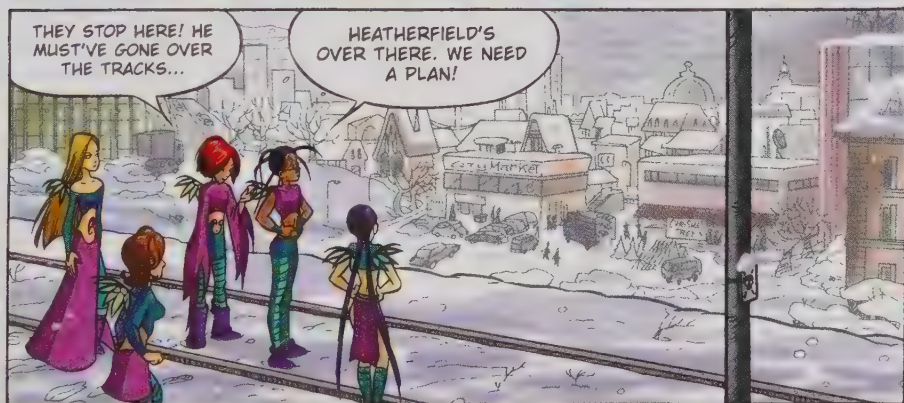
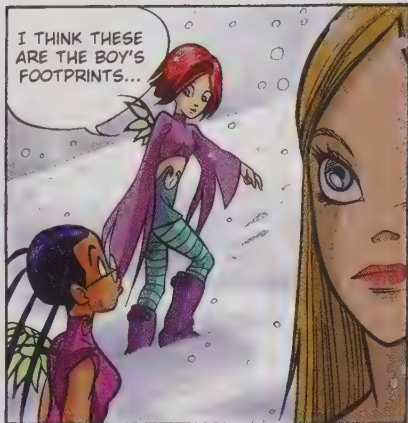


IF THEY CHANGE
THEIR APPEARANCE,
NO ONE WILL NOTICE
THEM.



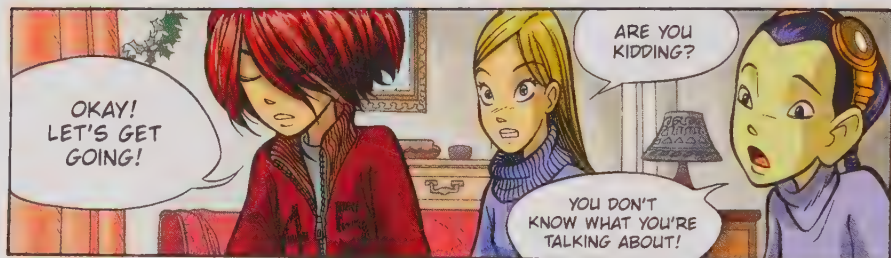
BUT RESEPH
DOESN'T KNOW
HOW TO DO THIS
YET! FIND HIM—
PLEASE!

DON'T WORRY! GO
WITH MS. RUDOLPH!
WE'LL START LOOKING
FOR HIM RIGHT
AWAY!





KANDRAKAR
IS THE ONLY PLACE
WHERE ALL QUESTIONS
HAVE AN ANSWER!





IF YOU'RE GOING
TO KANDRAKAR,
I'M GOING
WITH YOU.

HMMM...
A PLACE WITH ALL
THE ANSWERS,
HUH?

THAT MEANS
THEY'LL HAVE THE
ANSWERS TO MY
FRENCH TEST!

HA-HA-HA!
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT
THAT, IRMA, BUT WE'LL
FIND OUT SOON...

...BECAUSE THE HEART
OF KANDRAKAR WILL
LEAD US THERE!

LET'S FOCUS!

IN KANDRAKAR...

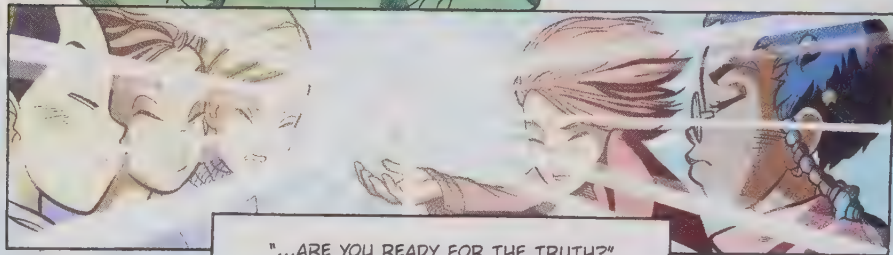
THIS IS
UNHEARD OF,
ORACLE!

NO GUARDIAN
HAS EVER DARED SUCH
A FEAT BEFORE. WHAT DO
YOU INTEND TO DO
ABOUT THIS?

NOTHING THAT
WILL UPSET THE
**COUNCIL OF THE
WISEMEN**. I BELIEVE
THEY'RE VERY FOND OF
THESE GIRLS.



THEIR REQUEST FOR
KNOWLEDGE IS LEGITIMATE.
SO, GIRLS...

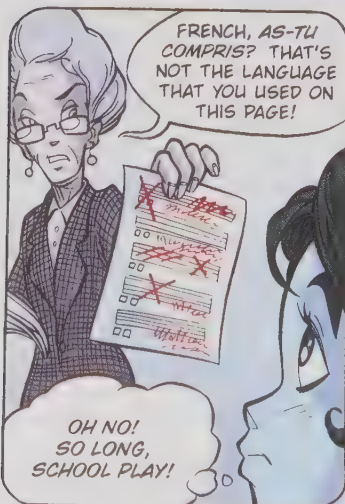


"...ARE YOU READY FOR THE TRUTH?"



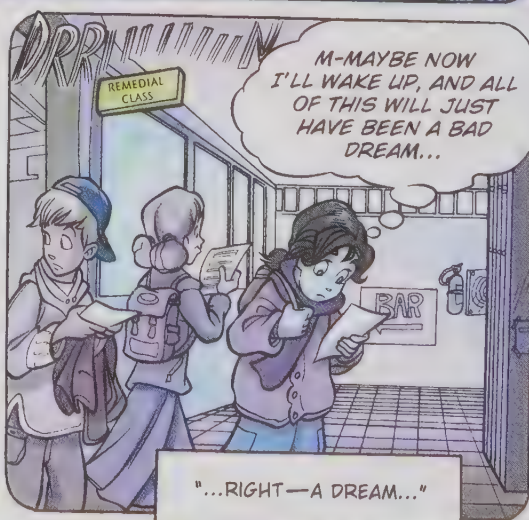
HERE'S YOUR
FRENCH TEST,
IRMA.

HERE
GOES
NOTHING!



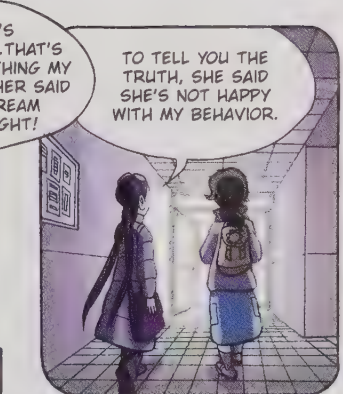
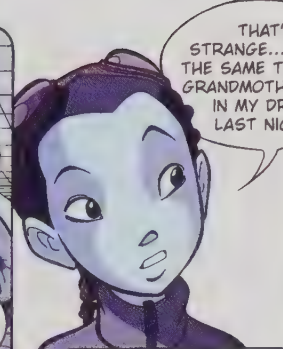
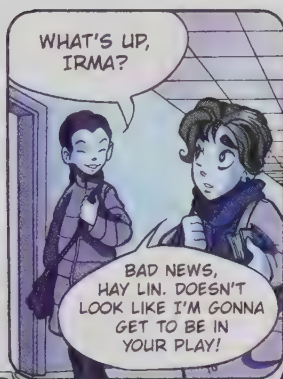
FRENCH, AS-TU
COMPRIS? THAT'S
NOT THE LANGUAGE
THAT YOU USED ON
THIS PAGE!

OH NO!
SO LONG,
SCHOOL PLAY!

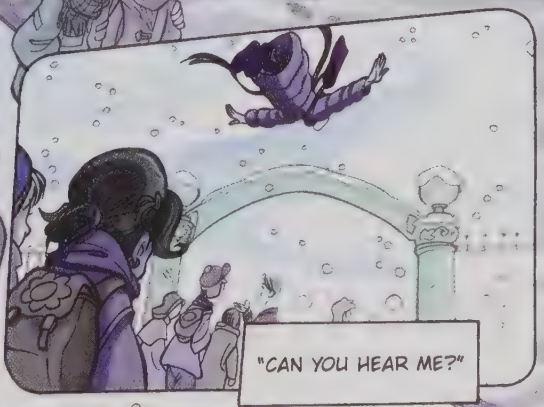
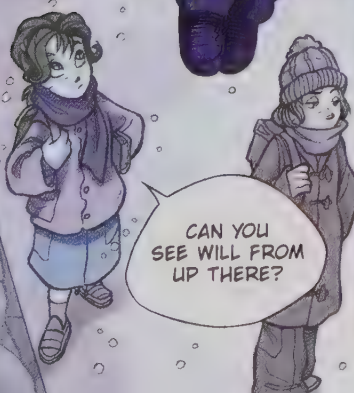
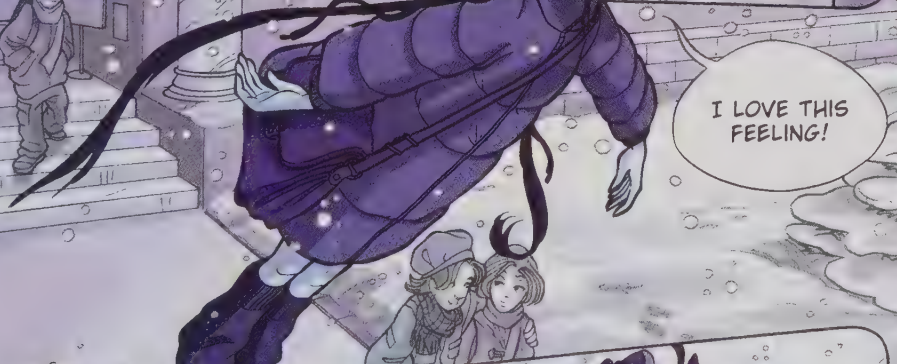
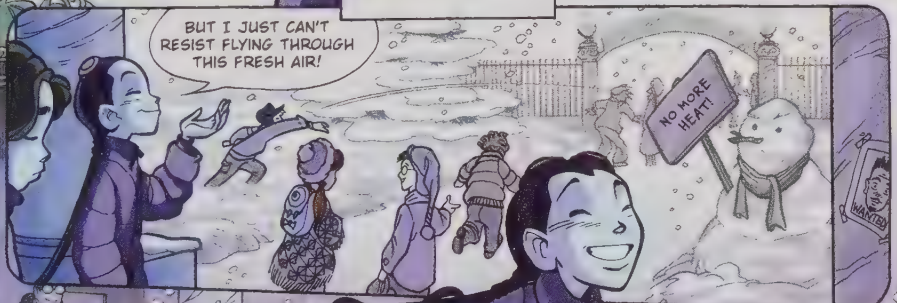


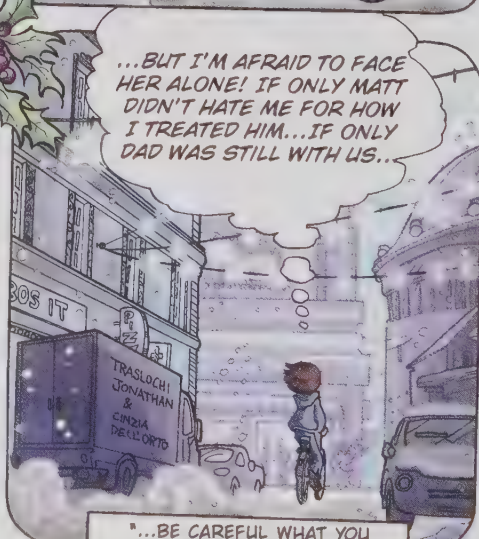
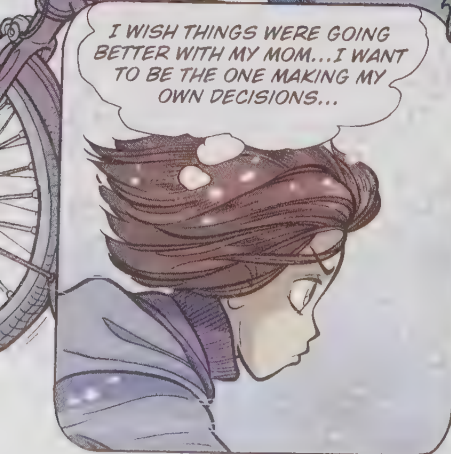
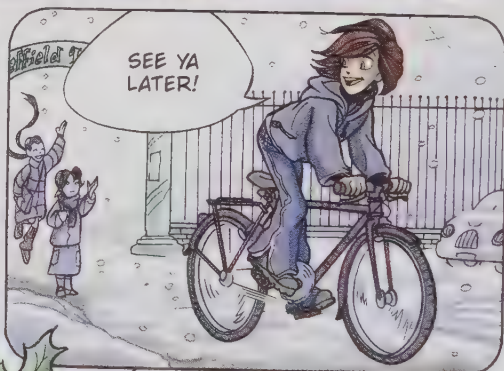
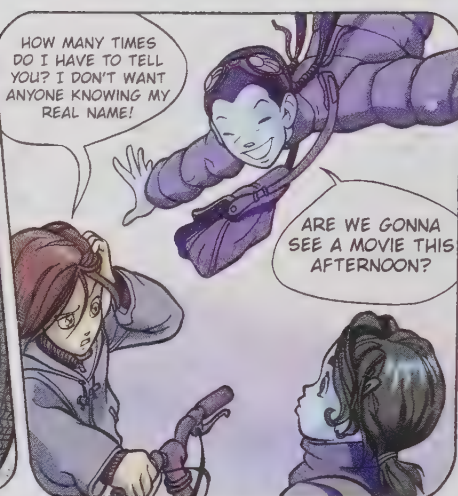
M-MAYBE NOW
I'LL WAKE UP, AND ALL
OF THIS WILL JUST
HAVE BEEN A BAD
DREAM...

"...RIGHT—A DREAM..."

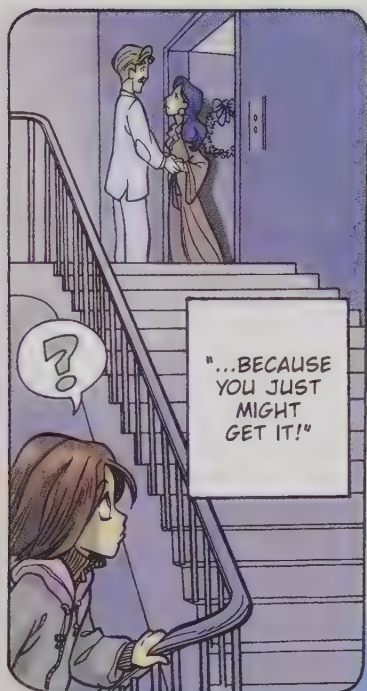


"...WAKE UP!"





"...BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU
WISH FOR, WILL..."

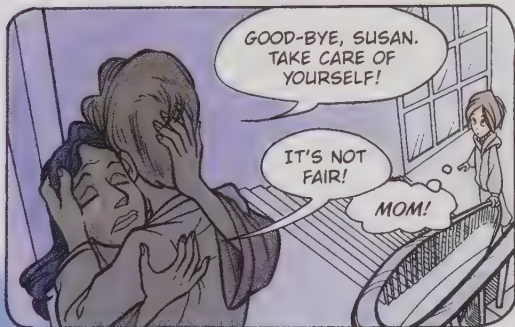


"...BECAUSE
YOU JUST
MIGHT
GET IT!"



WE'VE ALREADY DISCUSSED
THIS! I CAN'T LET YOU TURN
THIS DOWN.

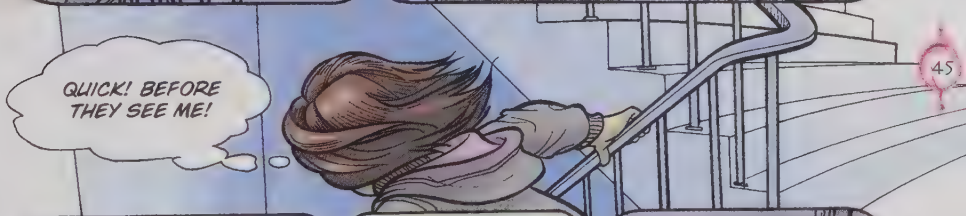
THEN...
WE'RE OVER?



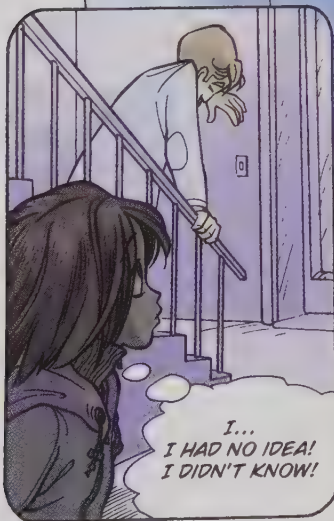
GOOD-BYE, SUSAN.
TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF!

IT'S NOT
FAIR!

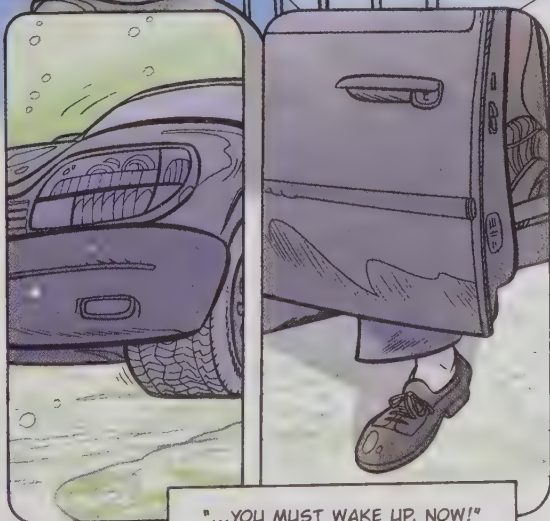
MOM!



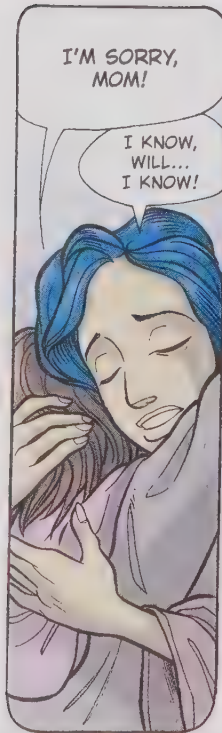
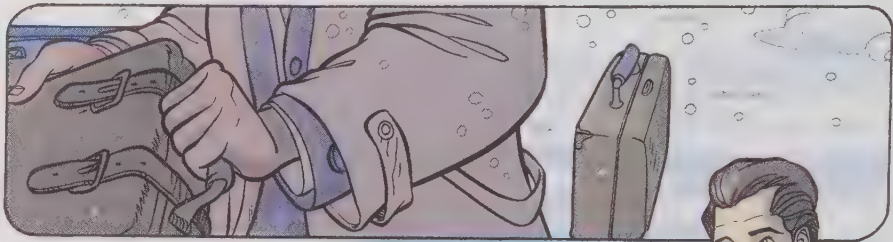
QUICK! BEFORE
THEY SEE ME!



I...
I HAD NO IDEA!
I DIDN'T KNOW!

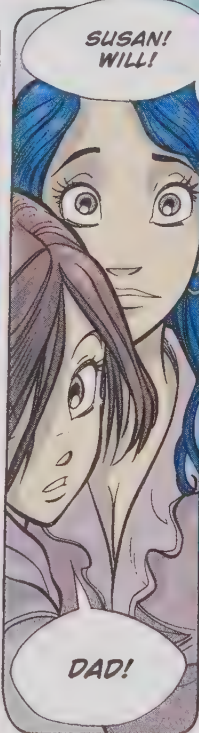


"...YOU MUST WAKE UP, NOW!"



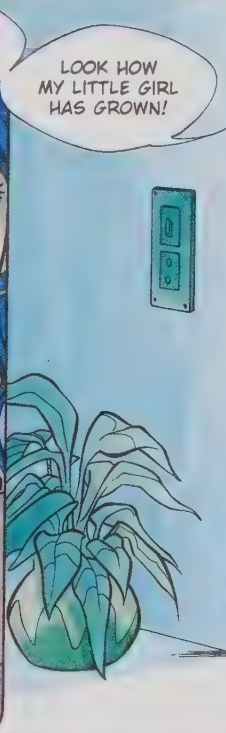
I'M SORRY,
MOM!

I KNOW,
WILL...
I KNOW!

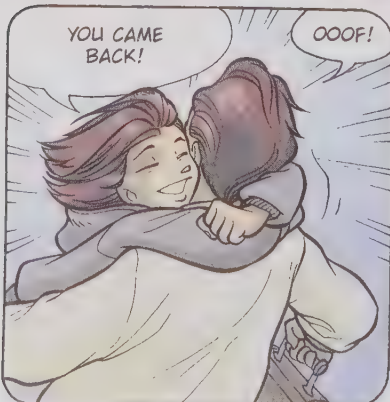


SUSAN!
WILL!

DAD!

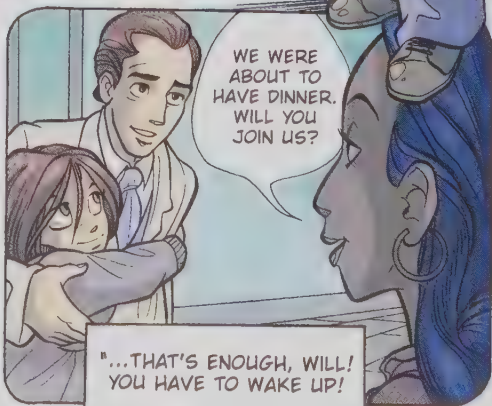


LOOK HOW
MY LITTLE GIRL
HAS GROWN!



YOU CAME
BACK!

OOOF!



WE WERE
ABOUT TO
HAVE DINNER.
WILL YOU
JOIN US?

"...THAT'S ENOUGH, WILL!
YOU HAVE TO WAKE UP!

"GIRLS, IT'S TIME FOR ALL
OF YOU TO WAKE UP..."

GET DOWN HERE,
LAZYBONES!

ONLY IF
YOU STOP
YELLING!

PETER, YOUR
GIRLFRIEND CAN
BE SO RUDE
SOMETIMES!

ARE YOU STILL
TALKING TO THAT
TRAITOR?

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO
YOU, LITTLE SISTER?

WE'VE
TALKED ABOUT
THIS,
TARANEE...

ELYON IS
OUR FRIEND! WHAT
HAPPENED IS OVER
AND DONE WITH...

WHY DO YOU KEEP
MAKING EXCUSES
FOR HER?

SHE SOLD US
OUT TO CEDRIC! SHE
TRIED TO GET RID OF
US!



LI KKUNN TUI KKIENN
KKANN...

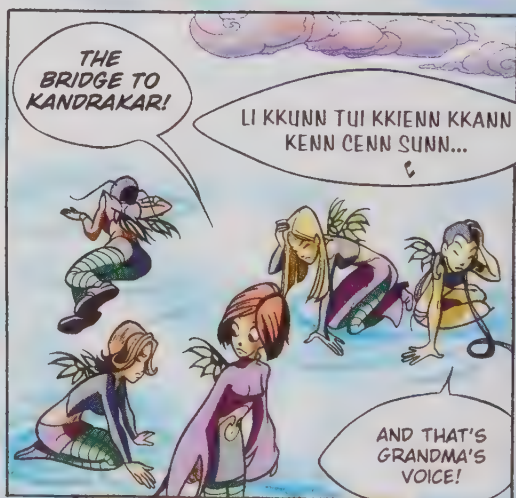
...KENN CENN LI KKUNN TUI
KKIENN KKANN KENN CENN...

SUNN LI KKUNN TUI
KKIENN KKANN...

..."OPEN YOUR EYES!"



AH...

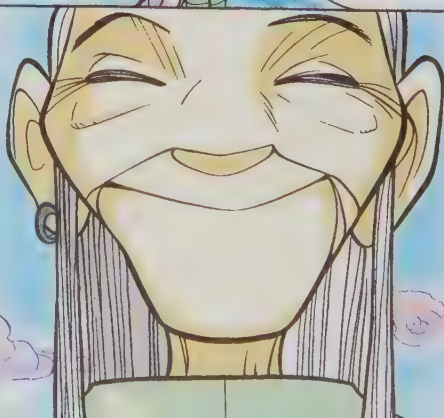


THE
BRIDGE TO
KANDRAKAR!

LI KKUNN TUI KKIENN KKANN
KENN CENN SUNN...

AND THAT'S
GRANDMA'S
VOICE!

HERE, NOTHING IS
AS IT SEEMS.



INCREDIBLE!

YOU HAVE DEMONSTRATED
GREAT STRENGTH, HERE—
WHERE DESIRES AND
FEARS BECOME REAL!

BUT THEN...
COLLINS? AND
MY DAD?

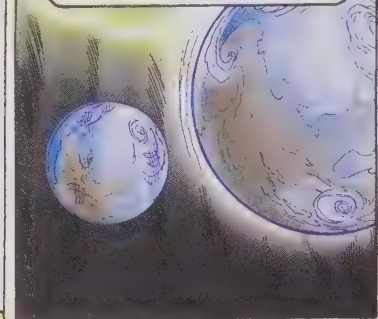
IT WAS
JUST A DREAM,
WILL. JUST LIKE
THE SENSATION
OF FLYING...

PETER
AND ELYON...
THEY WERE
ILLUSIONS TOO!

WE'RE
HAVING TROUBLE
GRASPING THIS,
GRANDMOTHER.
PLEASE HELP
US.

I WILL...STARTING FROM THE
BEGINNING! COME CLOSER...
THIS IS THE STORY OF THE
VEIL...

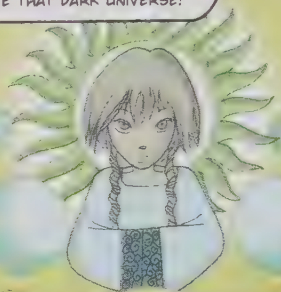
...IT WAS CREATED TO DEFEND
THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE FROM
THE THREAT OF METAMOOR!



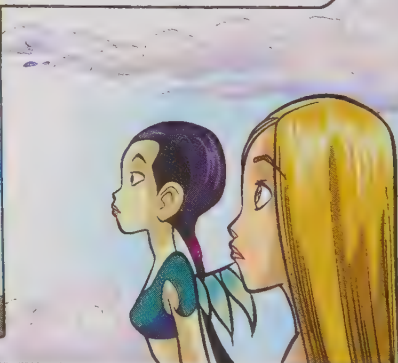
THE ANCIENT WISE MEN OF KANDRAKAR
ERECTED THE BARRIER AS WE WAITED FOR
THE LIGHT OF MERIDIAN TO RISE AND
ILLUMINATE THAT DARK UNIVERSE!



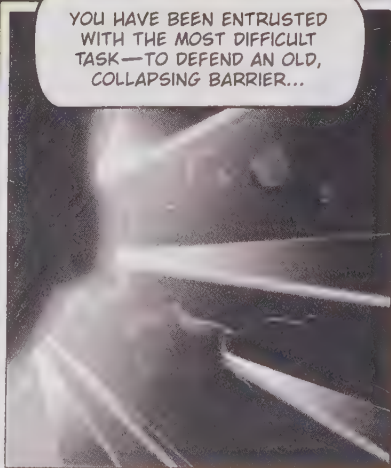
ELYON!



HER ARRIVAL WOULD RESTORE
BALANCE. UNTIL THEN, THE
GUARDIANS WOULD WATCH OVER
THE VEIL.

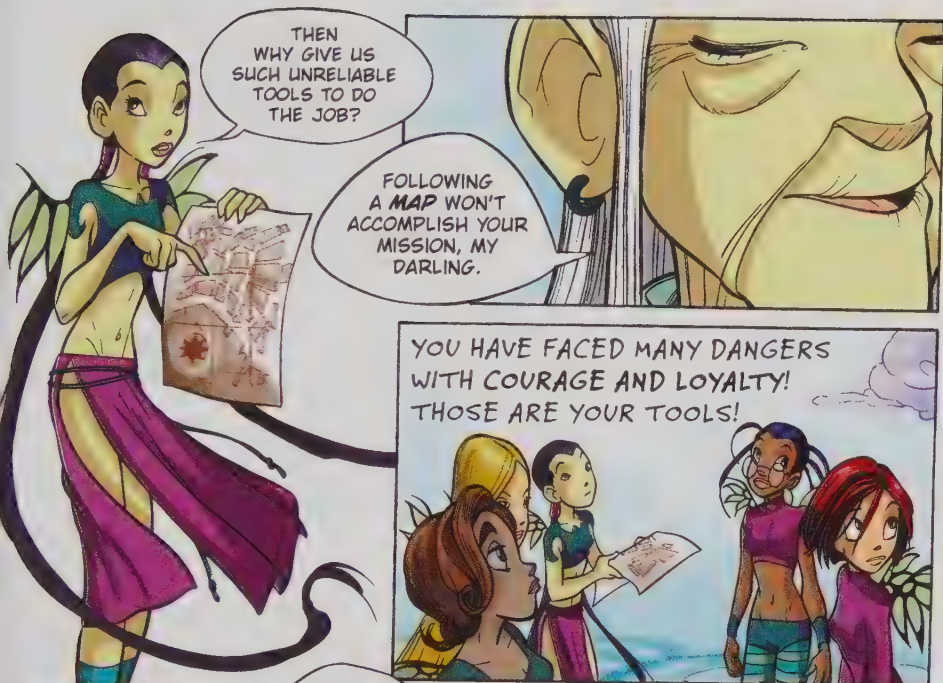


YOU HAVE BEEN ENTRUSTED
WITH THE MOST DIFFICULT
TASK—TO DEFEND AN OLD,
COLLAPSING BARRIER...

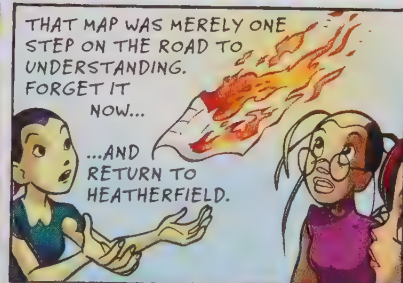
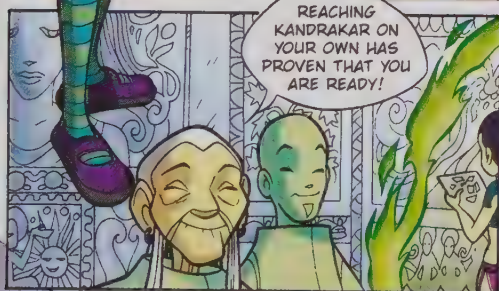
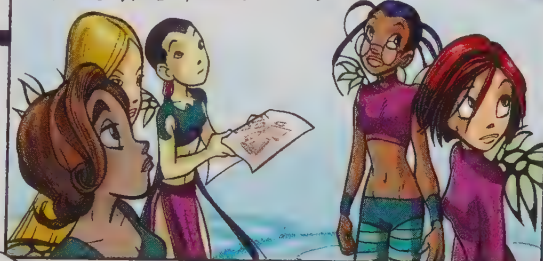


...AND TO PROTECT MERIDIAN
FROM THE EVIL PLANS OF
PRINCE PHOBOS!





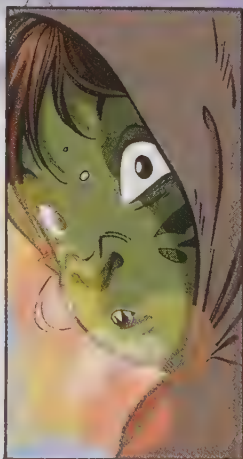
YOU HAVE FACED MANY DANGERS
WITH COURAGE AND LOYALTY!
THOSE ARE YOUR TOOLS!

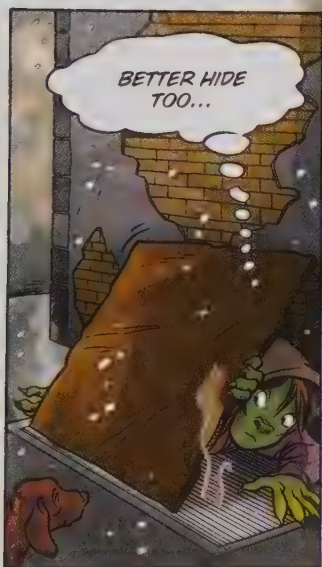
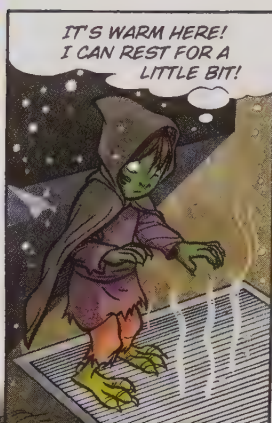
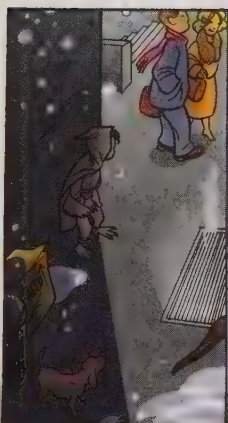


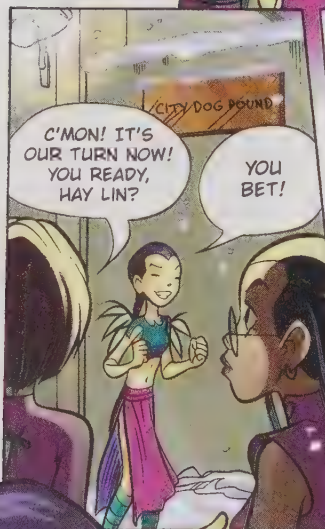
"RESEPH IS IN DANGER!
HE NEEDS YOU!"

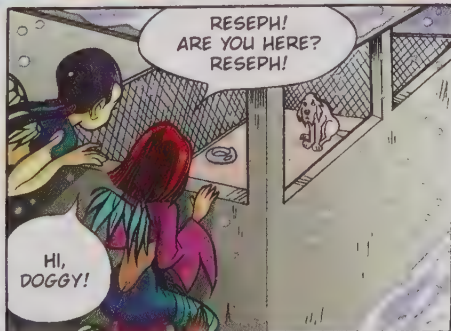
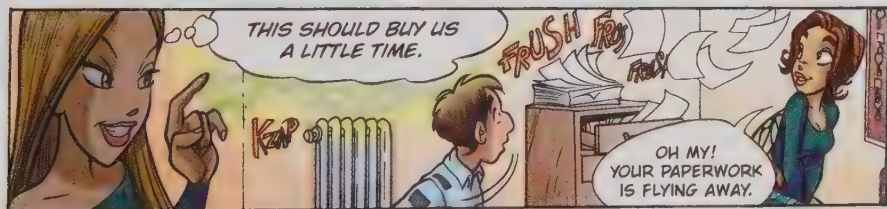
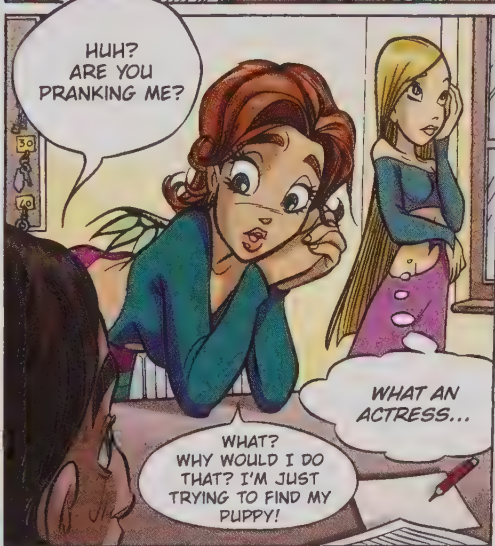
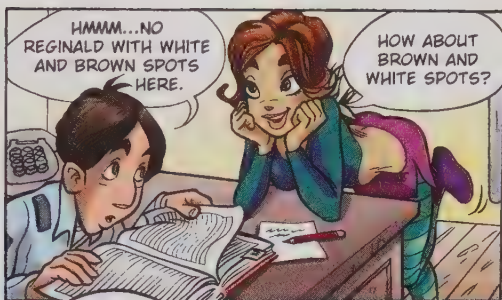
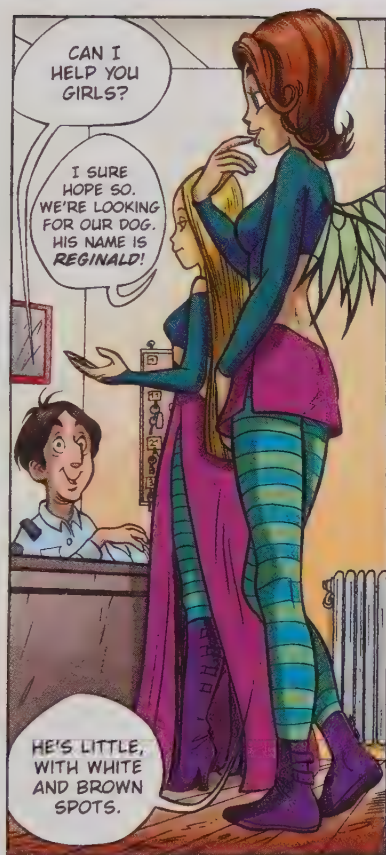


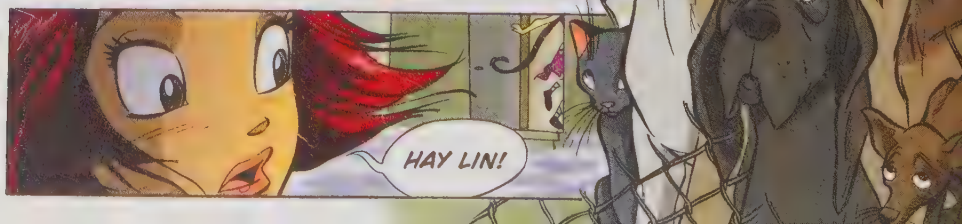
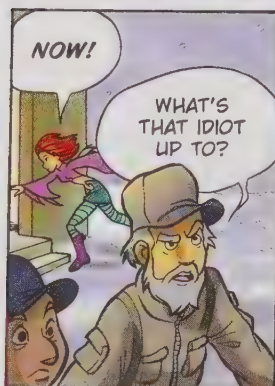
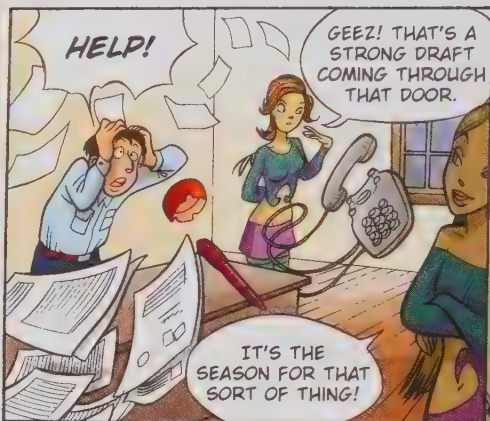
"LOOK FOR HIM AT THE DOG POUND.
I'LL SHOW YOU THE WAY!"

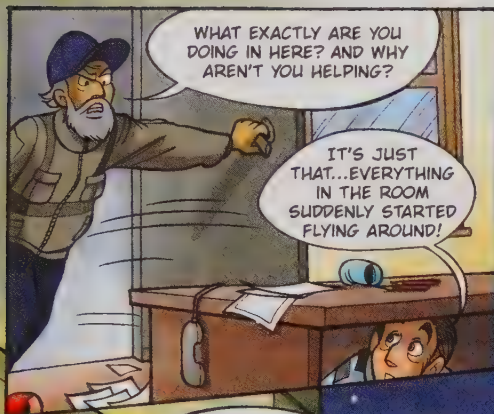






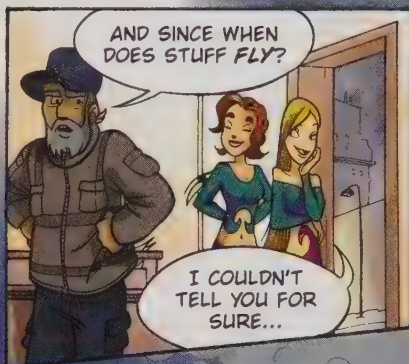






WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU DOING IN HERE? AND WHY AREN'T YOU HELPING?

IT'S JUST THAT...EVERYTHING IN THE ROOM SUDDENLY STARTED FLYING AROUND!



AND SINCE WHEN DOES STUFF FLY?

I COULDN'T TELL YOU FOR SURE...



...BUT IT'S CERTAINLY HAPPENING A LOT HERE!

CITY DOG POUND

=GASP=

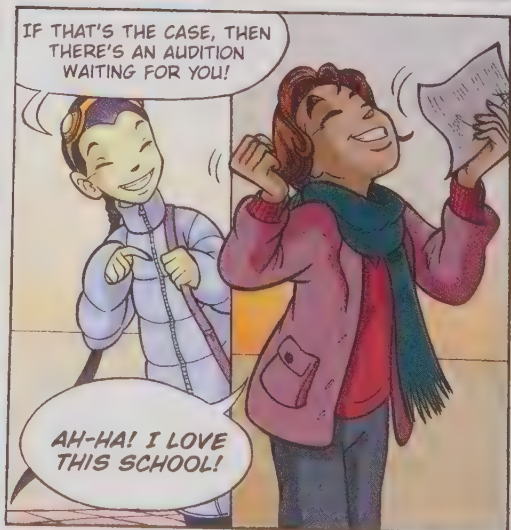
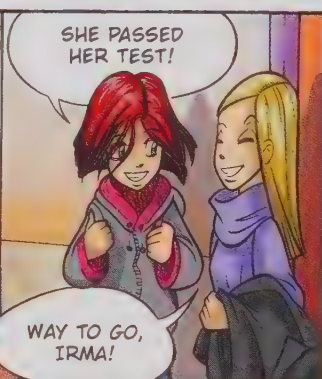
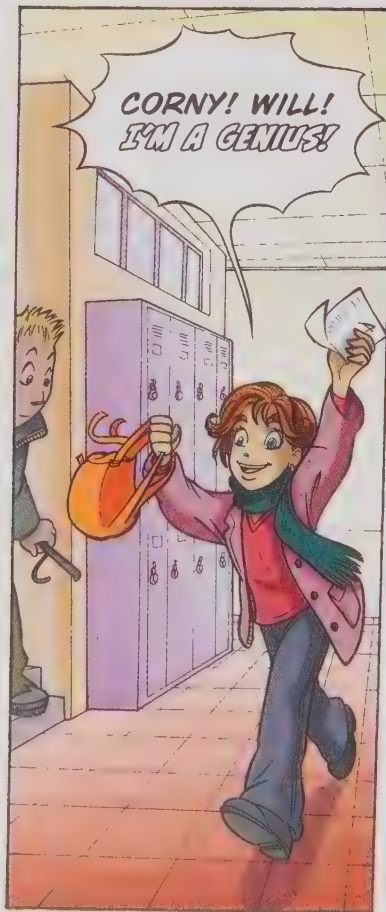
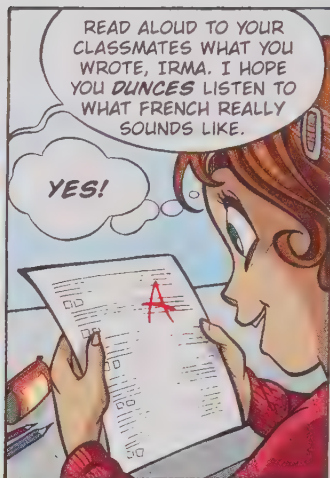
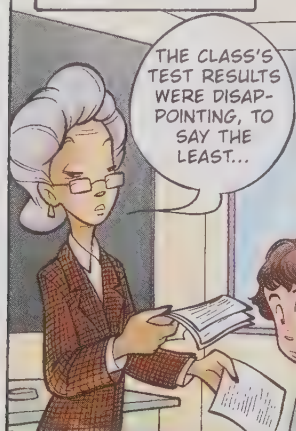
ARGH!

MAYBE IT'S TIME FOR US TO LEAVE, YES?

AGREED!
HAVE A NICE EVENING,
FELLAS, AND IF I CAN
GIVE YOU A PIECE
OF ADVICE...

...DON'T STRESS
ABOUT IT!

EPILOGUE:
SHEFFIELD INSTITUTE,
THE NEXT DAY...



AND SO...

DON'T
MOVE A
MUSCLE!

OUCH!
YOU STABBED
ME!

'COS YOU KEEP
MOVING! YOU MAY BE
THE GREAT DRAGON, BUT
YOU'VE GOT THE
PATIENCE OF A
KITTEN!

LOOK
WHO'S HERE...
THE GRUMPERS!

GOOD!
I WAS WAITING
FOR THEM!

GIRLS, IT'S SO
NICE TO SEE
YOU!

WHAT'S SHE
DOING? WHY
IS SHE EVEN
TALKING TO
THEM?

CORNELIA HAS
QUESTIONABLE
TASTE IN FRIENDS!

THOSE
SLIMEBALLS! I'M
SO GLAD THEY
FAILED THEIR
AUDITIONS.

THAT'S THAT,
FINALLY!

YOU'RE STILL
TALKING TO
THEM?

CALM DOWN!
I ONLY TOLD THEM
ABOUT THE
PARTY!

PARTY?
WHAT PARTY?

THE COSTUME PARTY
AFTER THE SHOW! A SURPRISE
PARTY TO CELEBRATE THE NEW
GYM...

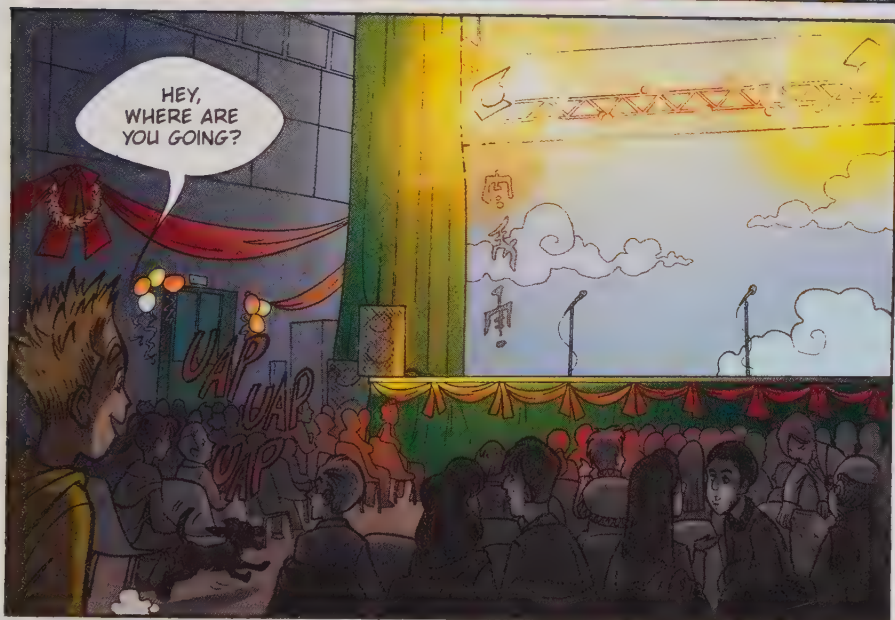
I TOLD THEM NOT TO TELL
ANYBODY! IT'S BY INVITATION
ONLY...AND THEY PROMISED
TO KEEP IT A SECRET.

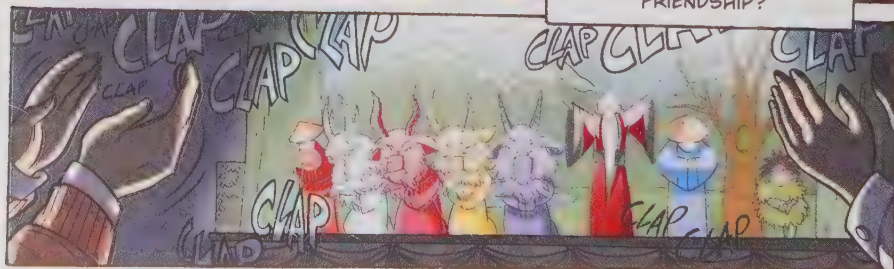
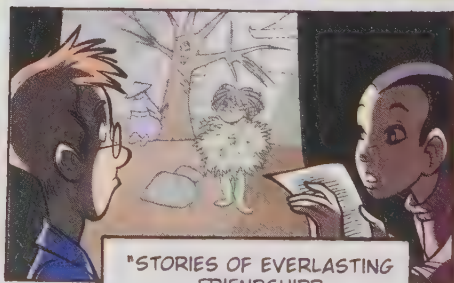
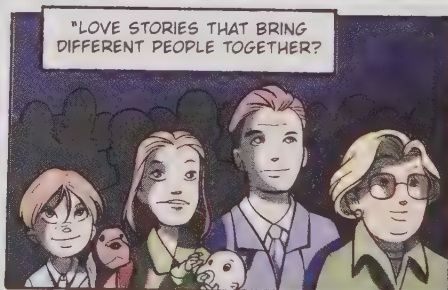
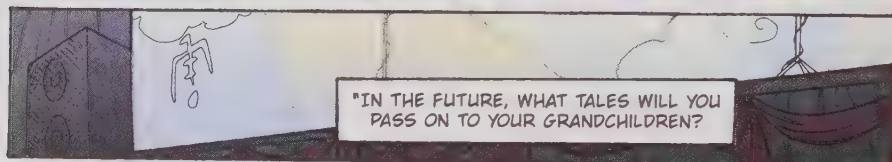
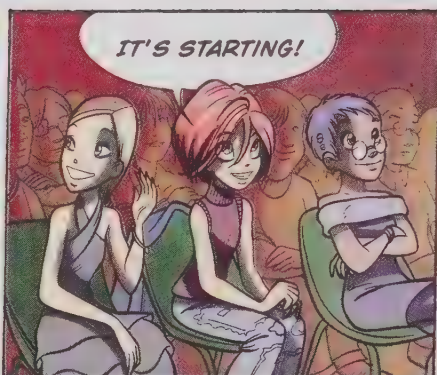
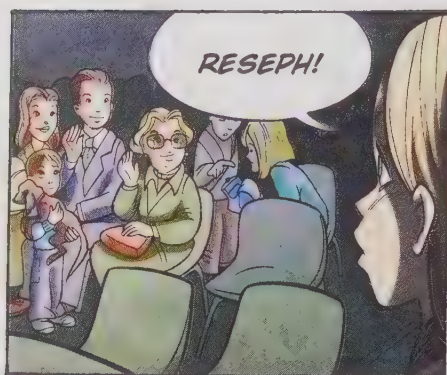
BUT...BUT...
BUT...

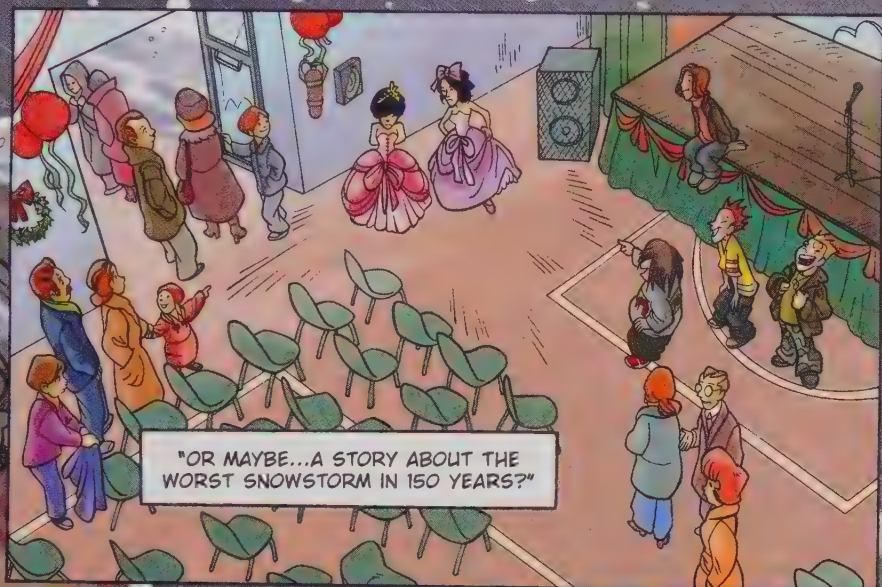
...THERE ISN'T
A PARTY AFTER
THE SHOW!

OH, *WE*
KNOW THAT...

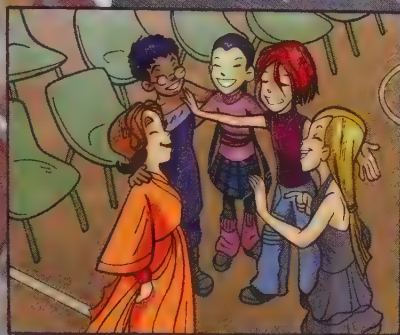
...BUT THE
GRUMPERS
DON'T!







"OR MAYBE...A STORY ABOUT THE
WORST SNOWSTORM IN 150 YEARS?"



MERRY
CHRISTMAS!

END OF
CHAPTER 9

Witch

Will Irma Terence Cornelia May Lin



A BRIDGE BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

“Friendship is a dry
passage in the
pouring rain.”



BOOOOUM

ELYON'S HOUSE, ON
THE OUTSKIRTS OF
HEATHERFIELD...

FROOOSH

THE ELECTRICITY'S OUT. MAYBE
WE SHOULD POSTPONE
THE INSPECTION...

OR MAYBE NOT! IT'S NOT OFTEN
THAT A WHOLE FAMILY
DISAPPEARS INTO THIN
AIR!

WHAT DO
WE HAVE
HERE?

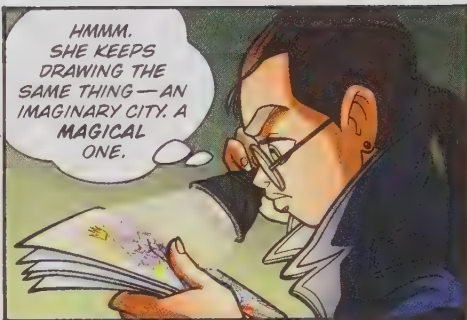
KRAAAKK

ELYON

DRAWINGS BY LITTLE ELYON BROWN, FROM WHEN SHE WAS SIX UNTIL HER DISAPPEARANCE. INTERESTING....!



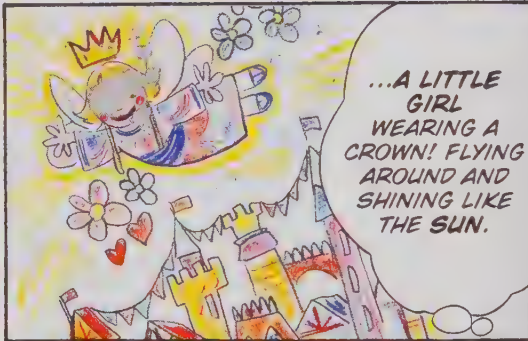
HMMM. SHE KEEPS DRAWING THE SAME THING — AN IMAGINARY CITY. A MAGICAL ONE.



HERE WE GO! THIS ONE IS COMPLETE. THE CITY, AGAIN, AND ABOVE IT...



...A LITTLE GIRL WEARING A CROWN! FLYING AROUND AND SHINING LIKE THE SUN.



LOOKS LIKE A DROP OF WATER FELL RIGHT ON HER FACE. THE COLORS ARE ALL SMEARED. TOO BAD.



POOR ELYON! WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR CARE-FREE DAYS?

MAY I COME IN?





UM...AGENT LAIR, YES?
HEADQUARTERS TOLD YOU
WE WERE COMING,
RIGHT?

YES. I'M A
DETECTIVE TOO,
BUT NOT LIKE
YOU **BRAINY**
ONES FROM
INTERPOL.

I'M **MARIA MEDINA.**
PSYCHOLOGIST FROM
THE MISSING PERSONS
DIVISION.

BUT
ALL THIS
HAPPENED
MONTHS
AGO...
WHY THE
SUDDEN
INTEREST?

RED TAPE. WE WERE ONLY JUST
ASSIGNED TO THIS CASE, AND WE'VE
ALREADY FOUND DISCREPANCIES.

SUCH AS?

FOR INSTANCE,
THE FACT THAT
THE **BROWN FAMILY**
DOESN'T
EXIST.

THIS IS
MY COLLEAGUE,
JOEL McTIENNAN.
HE DOESN'T TALK
MUCH...BUT WHEN
HE DOES,
HE BITES.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT? HEATHERFIELD
CITY HALL HAS
DOCUMENTS THAT...

THEY'RE FORGED!
WE HAD THEM
EXAMINED BY OUR
EXPERTS. WE'RE WELL
INFORMED.

BY THE WAY...
ONE OF THESE GIRLS IS
YOUR **DAUGHTER**, CORRECT?

"YES, BUT IT SEEMS YOU DON'T KNOW AS MUCH AS YOU THOUGHT. THE GIRL YOU'RE POINTING TO IS..."

WILL!
WIIII!

SHUT THE
DOOR! QUICK! IT'S
GETTING CRAZY
IN HERE!

WOOSH

CCZZZZ MEOW

CIP CIP CIP CIP

AUGGG

WOOF WOOF

BAU BAU

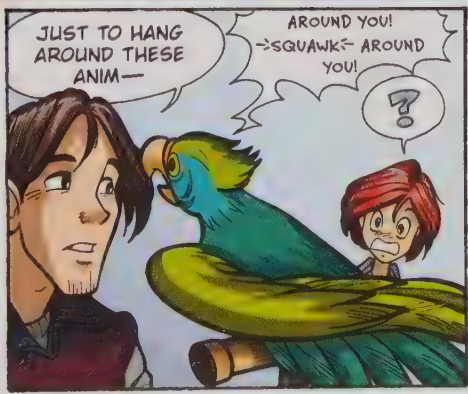
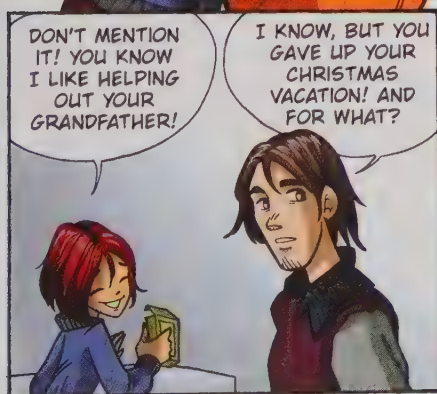
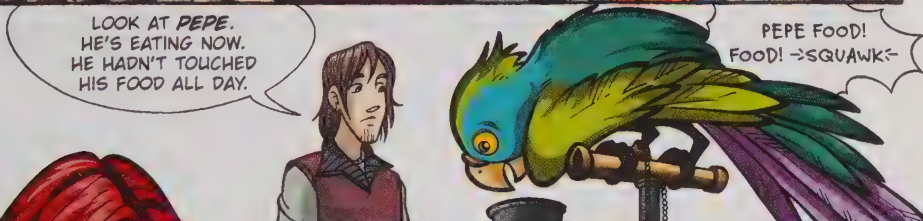
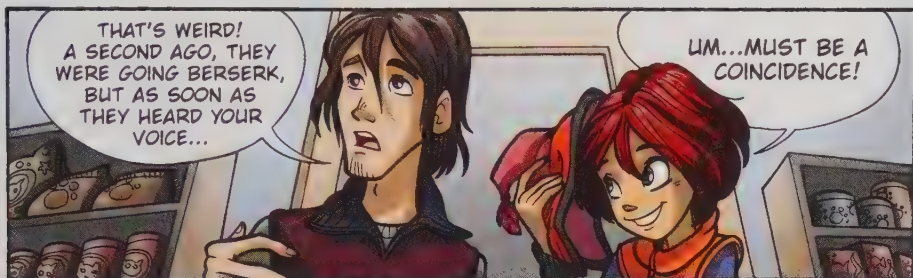
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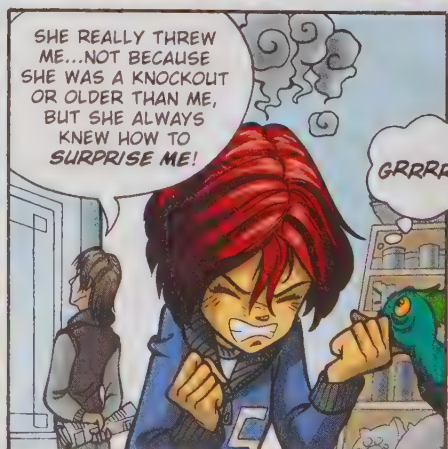
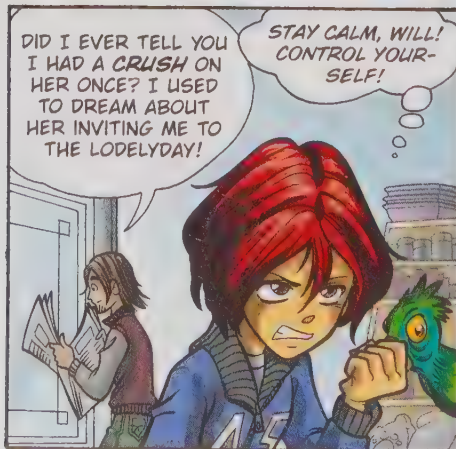
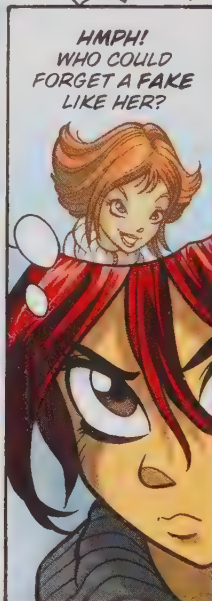
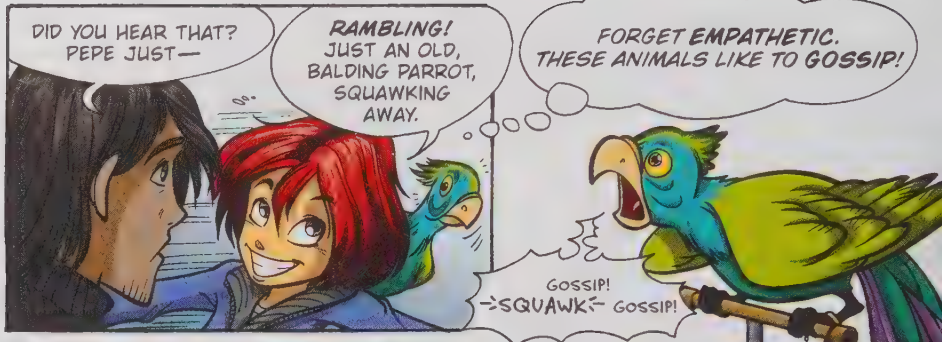
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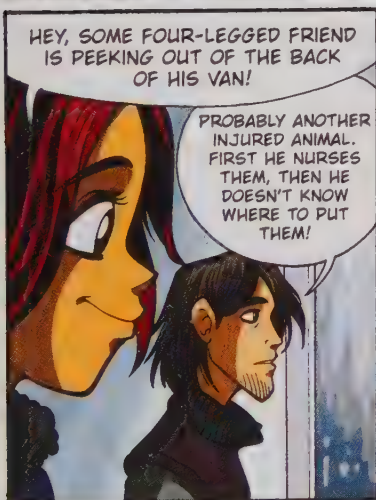
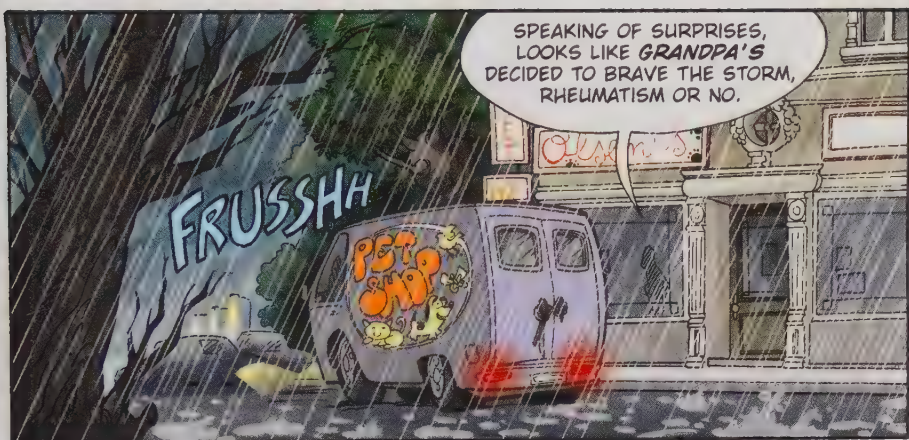
WHEW!
HI, MATT.
WHAT A
DAY...

?

?







LATER, AT THE
SILVER DRAGON
ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF TOWN...

PLEASE, MR.
LIN—IRMA'S
WAITING
FOR US.

I'M SORRY,
CORNELIA,
BUT HAY LIN
HAS TO HELP
ME CLEAN THE
RESTAURANT.

What a mess.
I bet it's all left over
from the New Year's
Eve party.

Yeah. Distract
my dad. I'll
take care of
the rest.

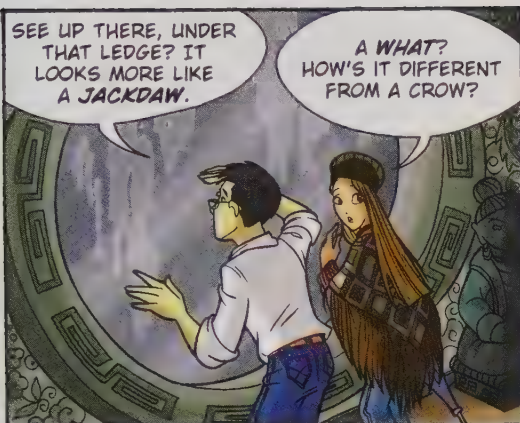
HAY LIN SAYS
YOU'RE SOME KIND
OF ORNITHOLOGIST.
IS THAT TRUE?

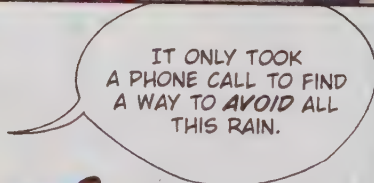
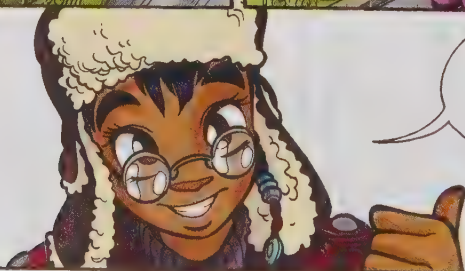
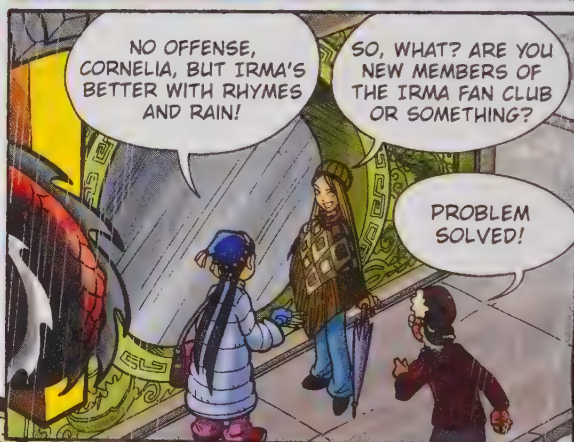
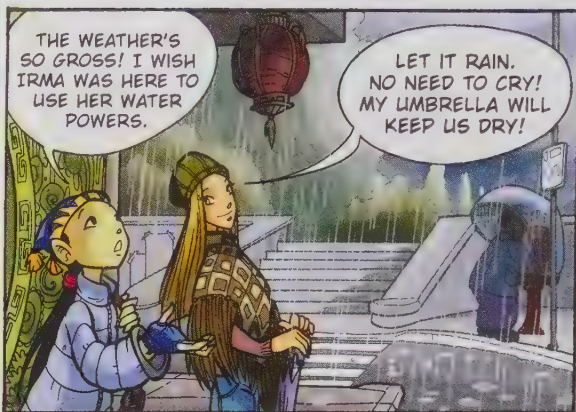
HUH? WELL,
I'M NOT EXACTLY
AN **EXPERT** ON
BIRDS, BUT I KNOW
A THING OR
TWO!

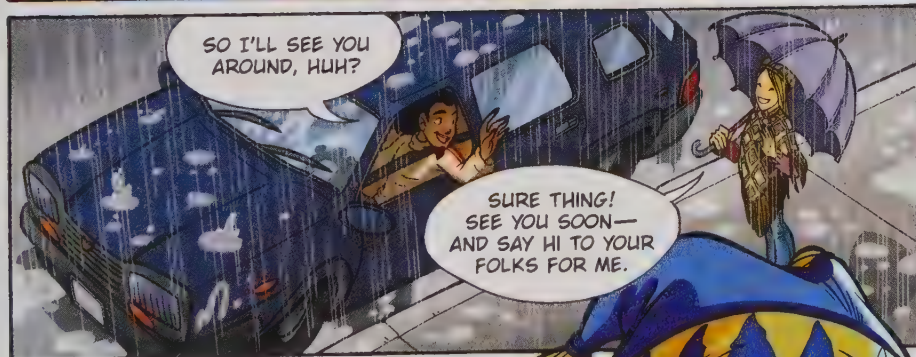
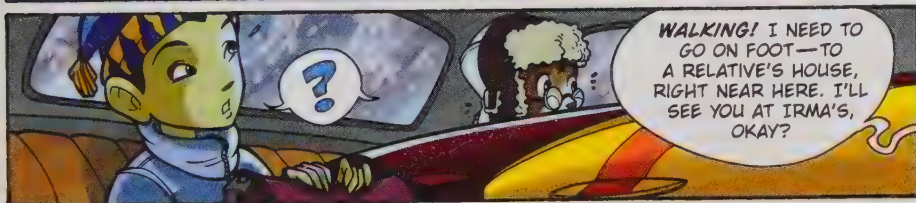
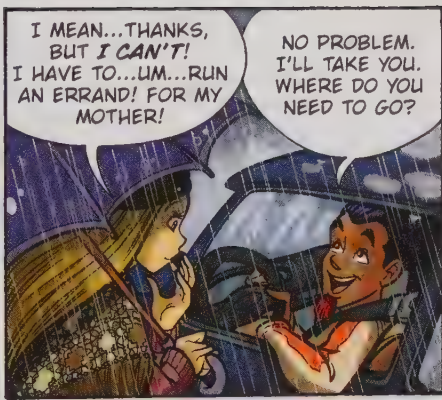
I CAN'T SEE VERY
WELL THROUGH ALL
THIS RAIN. THE BIRD
OUT THERE—
IS THAT A
CROW?

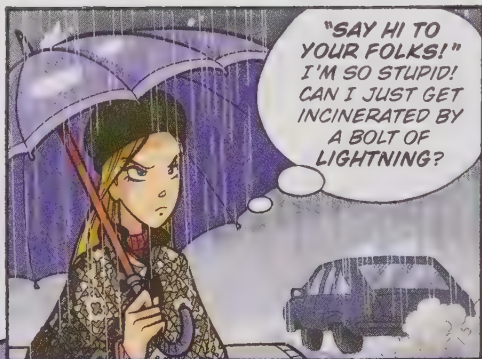
Just to say it
with a bit of flair...
Obey me now,
powers of air!

Step aside,
Taraneh.

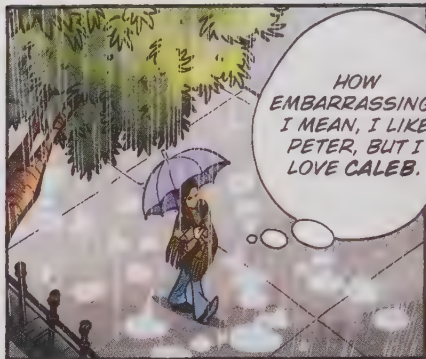




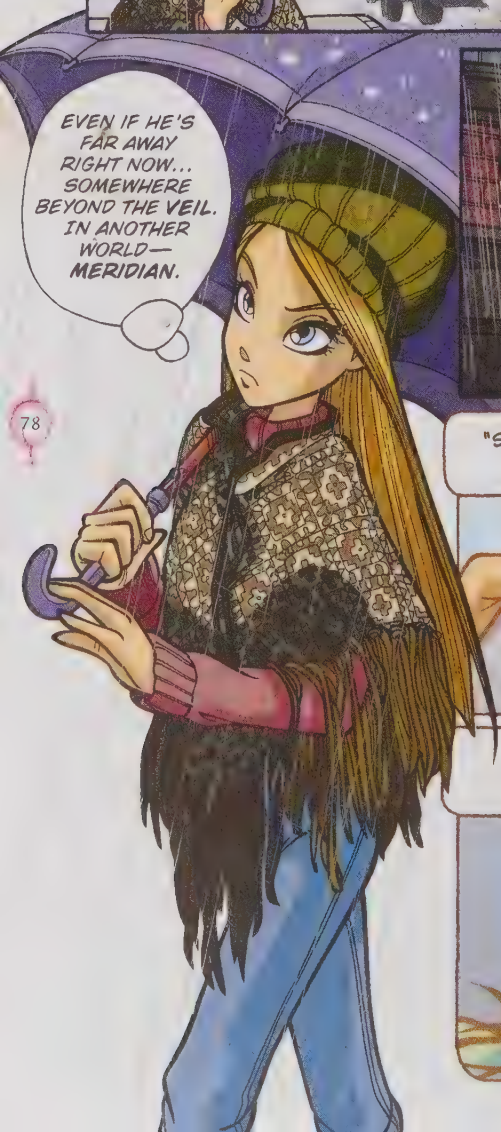




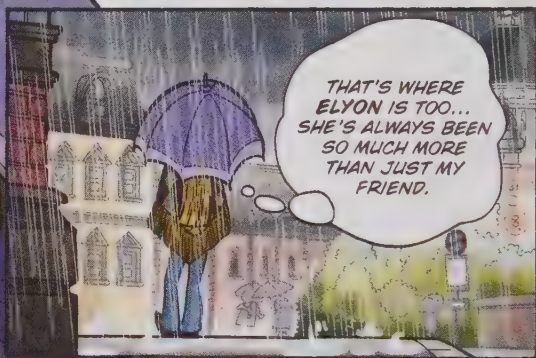
"SAY HI TO
YOUR FOLKS!"
I'M SO STUPID!
CAN I JUST GET
INCINERATED BY
A BOLT OF
LIGHTNING?



HOW
EMBARRASSING
I MEAN, I LIKE
PETER, BUT I
LOVE CALEB.

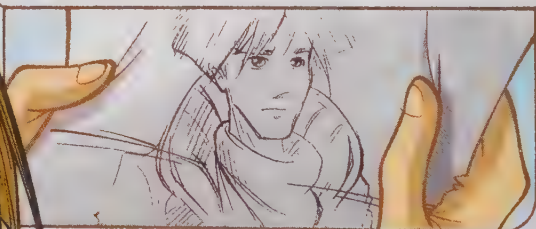


EVEN IF HE'S
FAR AWAY
RIGHT NOW...
SOMEWHERE
BEYOND THE VEIL.
IN ANOTHER
WORLD—
MERIDIAN.

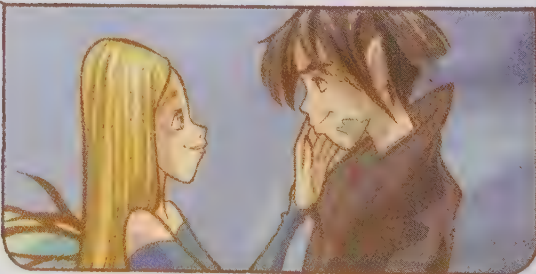


THAT'S WHERE
ELYON IS TOO...
SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN
SO MUCH MORE
THAN JUST MY
FRIEND.

"SHE WAS THE ONE WHO INTRODUCED ME TO MY
TRUE LOVE THROUGH THIS PICTURE.

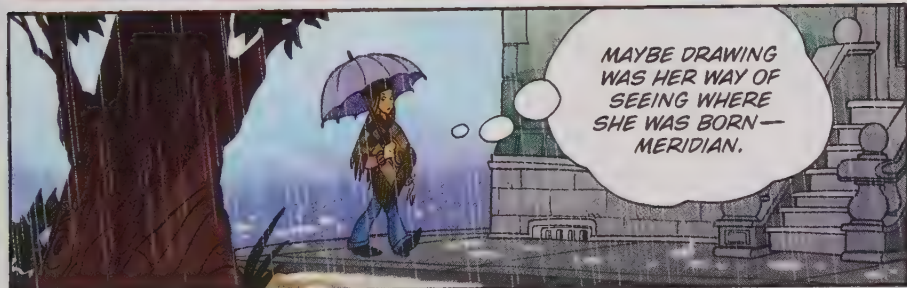


"AND THEN IT ALL BECAME REAL! CALEB
AND I FELL IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT, JUST
LIKE A BOOK OR A MOVIE.



"NOT A MINUTE GOES BY THAT I DON'T THINK ABOUT ELYON—AND ALL OF US TOGETHER..."

HER ART IS INCREDIBLE. COULD SHE HAVE INVENTED CALEB? OR MAYBE SHE SAW HIM SOMEWHERE BEFORE?

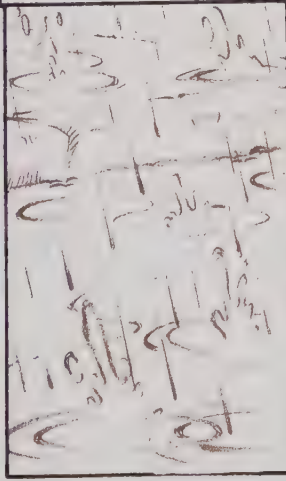


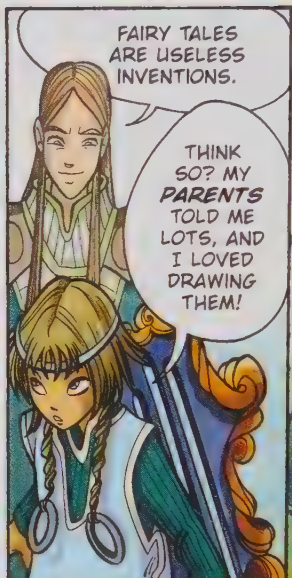
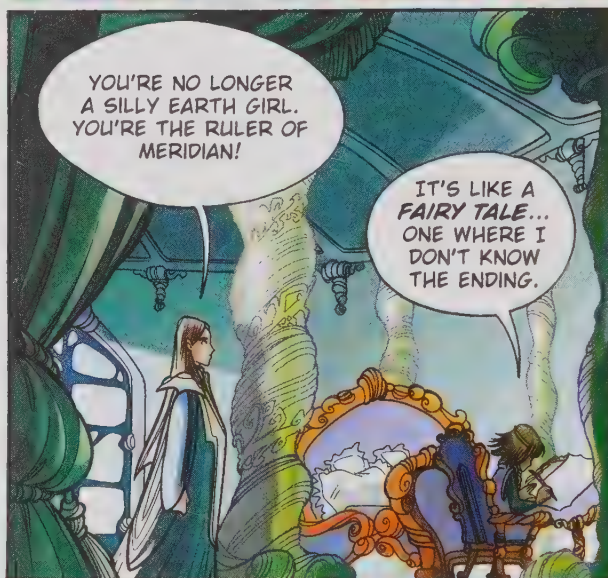
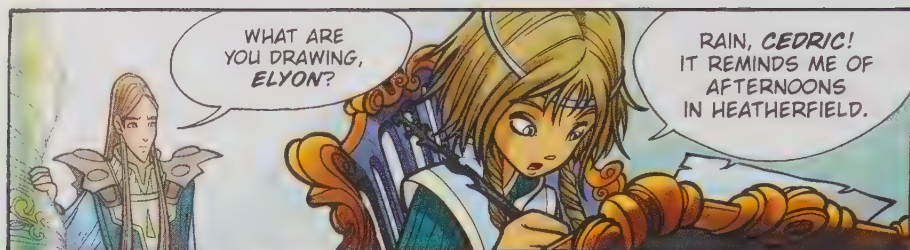
MAYBE DRAWING WAS HER WAY OF SEEING WHERE SHE WAS BORN—MERIDIAN.

"A WAY TO TRY TO CROSS IMPASSABLE BARRIERS, LIKE THE VEIL..."

"...AND, WITHOUT REALIZING IT, A WAY OF BUILDING A SORT OF **BRIDGE**..."

"...BETWEEN OUR TWO WORLDS!"

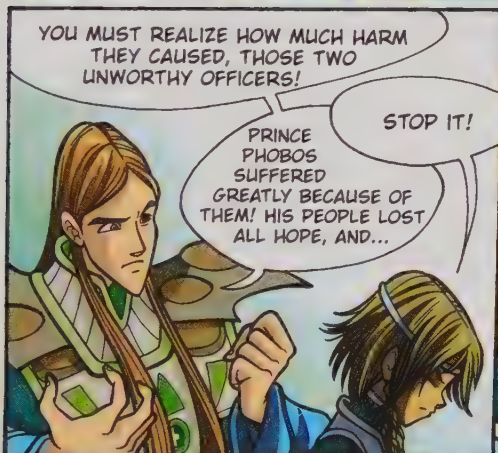






YOUR PARENTS?
YOU MEAN THOSE
TRAITORS WHO
KIDNAPPED YOU?

CEDRIC!



YOU MUST REALIZE HOW MUCH HARM
THEY CAUSED, THOSE TWO
UNWORTHY OFFICERS!

PRINCE
PHOBOS
SUFFERED
GREATLY BECAUSE OF
THEM! HIS PEOPLE LOST
ALL HOPE, AND...

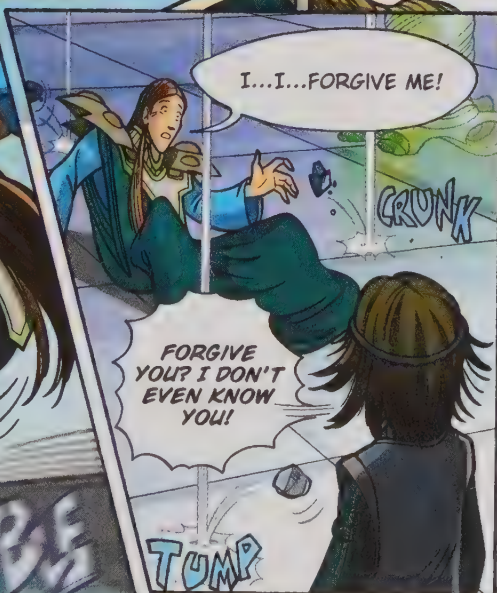
STOP IT!



**I SAID
STOP IT!**



YOU DON'T KNOW
THEM! YOU
CAN'T TALK
ABOUT THEM
LIKE
THAT!



I...I...FORGIVE ME!

FORGIVE
YOU? I DON'T
EVEN KNOW
YOU!

TUMP

THAT HURTS, ELYON! I'M
THE ONLY PERSON YOU
CAN TRUST!

REALLY?
FINE! THEN
TELL ME WHERE
MY HOME IS,
BECAUSE IT'S
NOT OUT
THERE!

I USED TO HAVE A MOTHER AND
FATHER. I HAD FRIENDS AND..

YOU ALSO
DIDN'T HAVE
A KINGDOM
TO WATCH
OVER!

FEAR NOT.
I'M HERE FOR YOU.
NOTHING IS STRONGER
THAN A **BROTHER'S**
BOND.

PRINCE PHOBOS!

WOULD YOU LIKE
CEDRIC TO LEAVE THIS
ROOM **FOREVER**, MY
DEAR SISTER?

THANK YOUR LUCKY
STARS, FOOL.
WAIT FOR ME IN
THE GARDEN.

YES,
MY LORD!

N-NO!
I'M JUST CONFUSED!
I'LL SPEAK WITH
HIM LATER.

PHOBOS? I'M THE **LIGHT OF**
MERIDIAN, RIGHT?

THAT IS WHAT AWAITS
YOU—THE **TITLE** THAT
WILL SOON BE YOURS!

I SPOKE WITH MY PARENTS...
MY ADOPTIVE ONES, IN PRISON.
I WOULD LIKE TO GRANT THEM
THEIR FREEDOM!

AH, A WISE DECISION!
BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT
A LITTLE WHILE LONGER.

OUR DYNASTIC POWERS ARE PASSED
DOWN TO THE WOMEN OF OUR
FAMILY, AND I WILL GLADLY
RELINQUISH THE CROWN
TO YOU.

SADLY, YOU
WILL BE ABLE
TO ASSUME
FULL
AUTHORITY
ONLY AFTER
THE OFFICIAL
CEREMONY.
DO YOU
UNDER-
STAND?

A CEREMONY?
WHEN IS IT?

SOON, MY DEAR
SISTER!

VERY SOON!

GOOD! EVEN IF THEY
AREN'T MY REAL
PARENTS, I'M HAPPY!
WE'LL SET EVERY-
THING RIGHT.
EVERYTHING!

"SHE'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING. SHE'S ALWAYS
BEEN SO GOOD AT THAT SORT OF THING."

ARE YOU SAD,
MOMMY? DON'T YOU
LIKE THE CITY
I DREW?

I'M NOT SAD,
ELYON! ACTUALLY,
YOUR DRAWING
REMINDS ME OF A
PLACE I KNEW A
LONG, LONG TIME
AGO!

TOMP

AND THIS GIRL WHO'S
FLYING...

SHE'S UGLY, I KNOW. I
WANTED HER TO LIGHT UP
THE WHOLE SKY LIKE THE
SUN!

BUT I MESSED UP ALL THE COLORS!
I CAN'T DRAW FACES
EITHER!

THEN YOU CAN TRY
AGAIN! SEE THIS
ERASER?

YOUR TURN! WITH ONE
WAVE OF YOUR HAND,
YOU CAN ERASE ANY
MISTAKE!

"REMEMBER, ELYON—
ANY MISTAKE."

YOU'VE MADE AN
UNFORGIVABLE
MISTAKE, CEDRIC!

SSHAATZZZ



YOU'VE
INSTILLED **DOUBT**
IN ELYON. HER FAITH
IS BEGINNING TO
WAIVER. THAT'S A
PROBLEM!

I...I DON'T
UNDERSTAND. SHE'S
ALWAYS BELIEVED
ME!

THINGS HAVE
CHANGED. THE SIGN
WAS CLEAR. YOU FELT
HER RAGE AS WELL,
DIDN'T YOU?

SHE'S MORE POWERFUL
THAN ANY OF US!
EVEN ME!

SHAAATTTTTT

ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT THAT **TREMOR?**
BUT SHE ISN'T POWERFUL
ENOUGH TO...

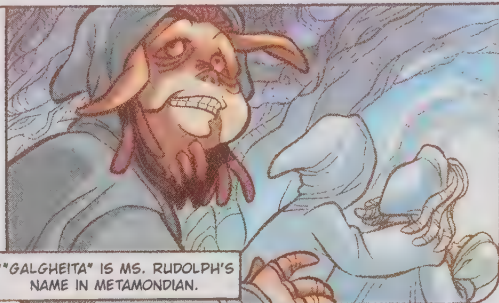
I SHOULD
LEARN TO
KEEP MY
MOUTH
SHUT.

HER POWER IS
LATENT RIGHT
NOW, BUT IT WILL
SHOW AS SHE
MATURES.

YET NOW WE RISK
SEEING HER GAIN HER
FULL POWERS BEFORE
THE TIME IS RIGHT.

IF THOSE TWO
OFFICERS HADN'T
KIDNAPPED HER WHEN
SHE WAS A BABY, I
WOULD HAVE ALREADY
ABSORBED HER
ENERGY BY NOW.

"AIDED BY *NURSE GALGHEITA**, THOSE TRAITORS TOOK MY SISTER TO EARTH."



**GALGHEITA* IS MS. RUDOLPH'S NAME IN METAMONDIAN.

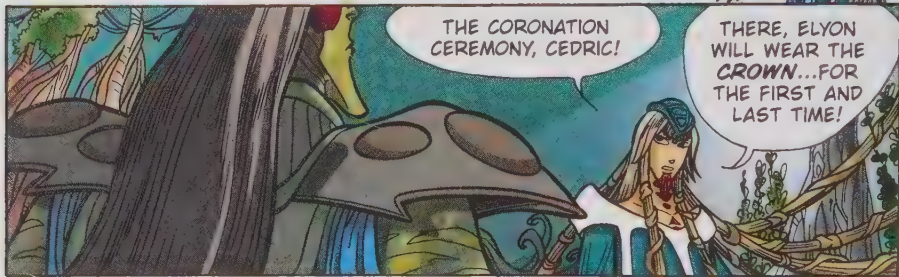
NOW, TO ABSORB HER VITAL FORCE, I NEED HER TO OVERCOME HER HESITANCE.

HOW WILL YOU DO THAT, MY LORD?



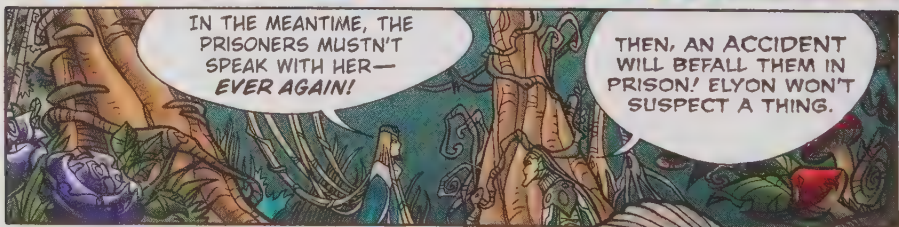
THE CORONATION CEREMONY, CEDRIC!

THERE, ELYON WILL WEAR THE **CROWN**...FOR THE FIRST AND LAST TIME!



IN THE MEANTIME, THE PRISONERS MUSTN'T SPEAK WITH HER—**EVER AGAIN!**

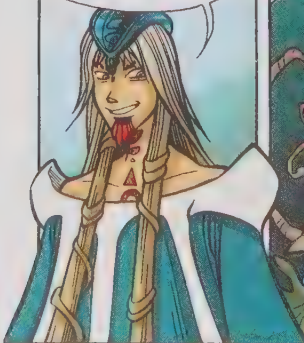
THEN, AN ACCIDENT WILL BEFALL THEM IN PRISON! ELYON WON'T SUSPECT A THING.



EXCELLENT! IF YOU DO A GOOD JOB, I WILL TAKE YOU TO THE **ABYSS OF SHADOWS**...

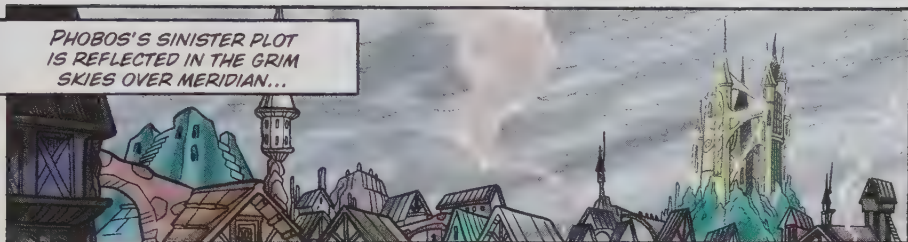
...WHERE YOU MAY DRINK FROM THE LEGENDARY **BLACK SPRING!**

YES, YES, YES! THE ULTIMATE HONOR!

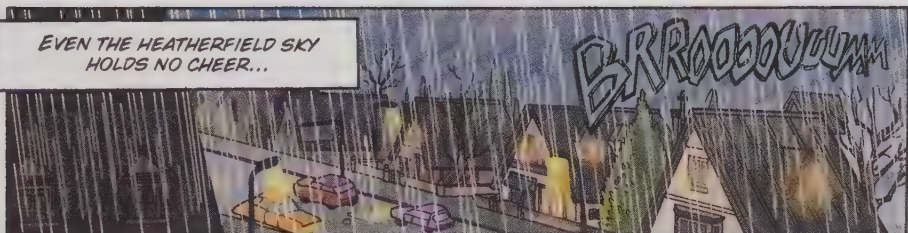


AND SOON, I TOO WILL LIVE IN THE PALACE—AS A MURMURER!

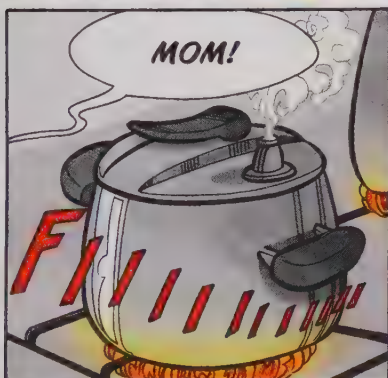
PHOBOS'S SINISTER PLOT
IS REFLECTED IN THE GRIM
SKIES OVER MERIDIAN...



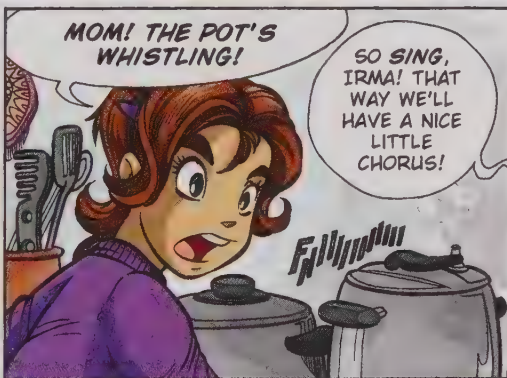
EVEN THE HEATHERFIELD SKY
HOLDS NO CHEER...



MOM!



MOM! THE POT'S
WHISTLING!



SO SING,
IRMA! THAT
WAY WE'LL
HAVE A NICE
LITTLE
CHORUS!

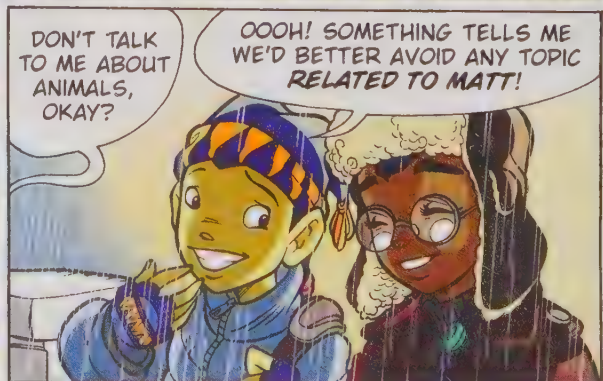
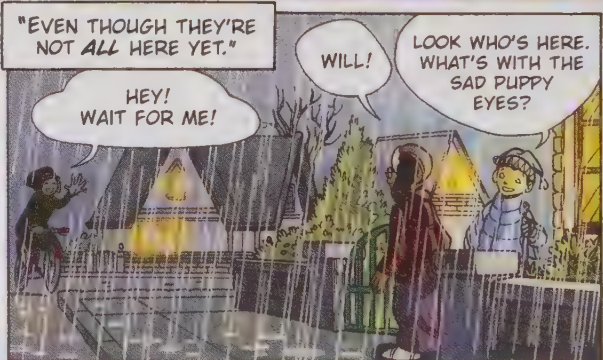
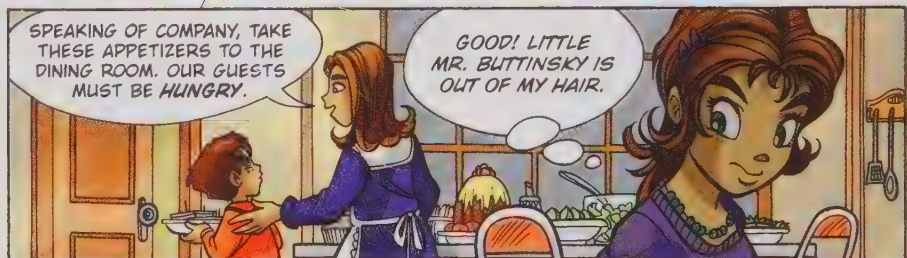
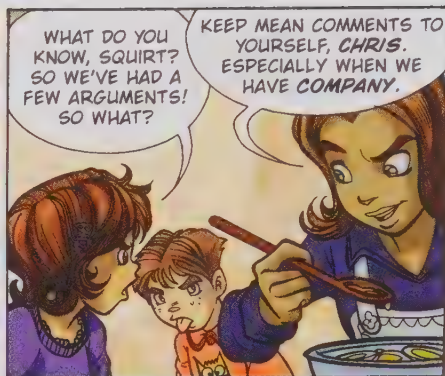
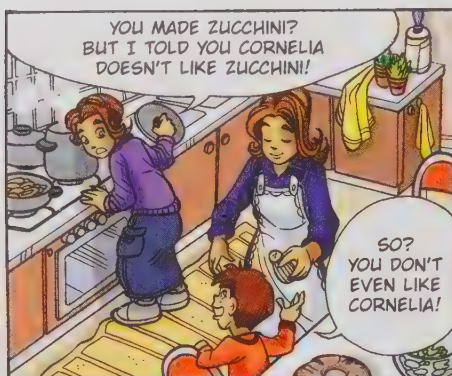
A CHORUS!
HEE-HEE-
HEE! A NICE
LITTLE
CHORUS!

NOW I KNOW WHY
WE NEED CHRISTOPHER.
YOU NEED A **SIDEKICK**
TO LAUGH AT THOSE
JOKES.

OF COURSE!
YOU AND YOUR FATHER
MAKE A TERRIBLE
AUDIENCE.

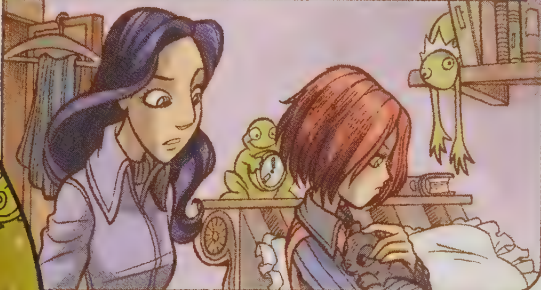
PASS
THE SALT,
PLEASE.







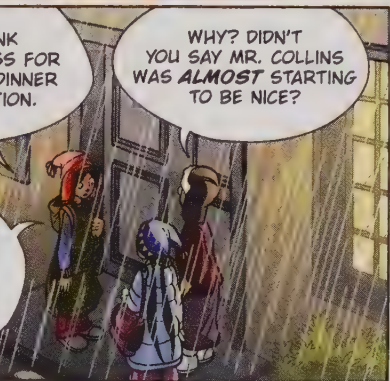
"MOM SAID WE HAD **SOMETHING IMPORTANT** TO TALK ABOUT—WITH **MR. COLLINS!**"



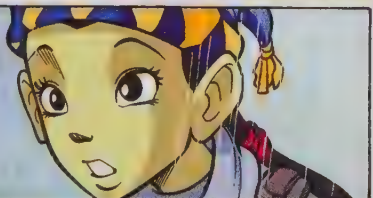
THANK GOODNESS FOR IRMA'S DINNER INVITATION.

WHY? DIDN'T YOU SAY MR. COLLINS WAS **ALMOST** STARTING TO BE NICE?

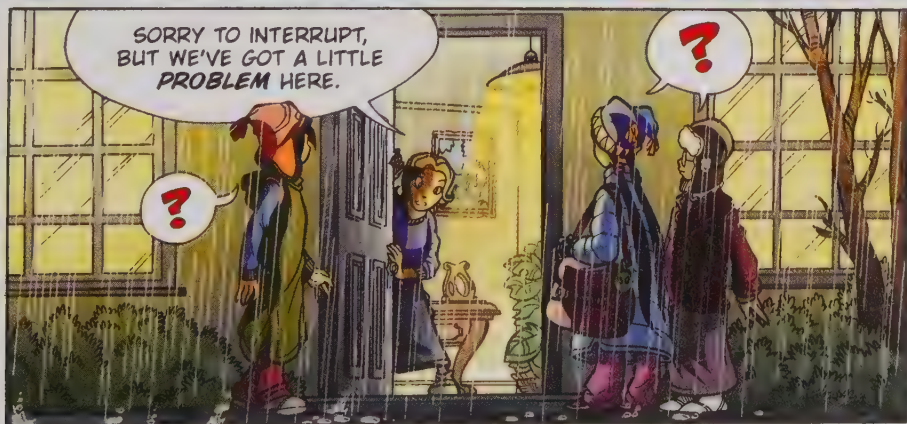
THERE'S A HUGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A NICE GUY AND A **DAD!**



OH, COME ON! YOU THINK THEY WANTED TO TELL YOU THEY'RE **ENGAGED**? ISN'T THAT A LITTLE SUDDEN?

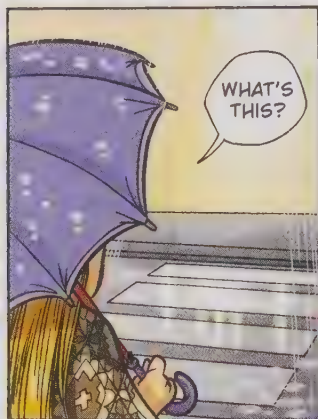


SORRY TO INTERRUPT, BUT WE'VE GOT A LITTLE **PROBLEM** HERE.



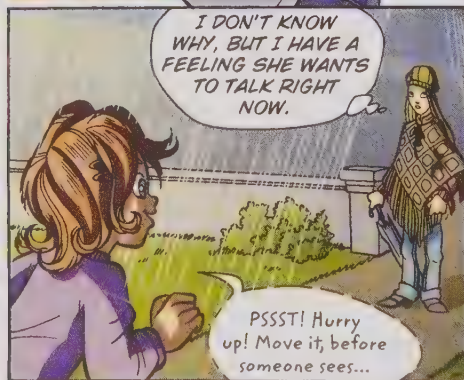
IRMA'S NOT THE ONLY
ONE WORRIED...

HERE I AM,
LATE, AS
USUAL.



WHAT'S
THIS?

A DRY TUNNEL
THROUGH THE RAIN.
THIS HAS GOT TO BE
IRMA'S WORK.



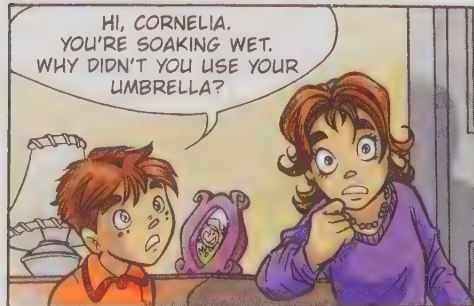
I DON'T KNOW
WHY, BUT I HAVE A
FEELING SHE WANTS
TO TALK RIGHT
NOW.

PSSST! Hurry
up! Move it, before
someone sees...

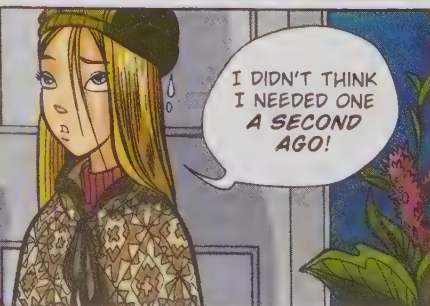


WHO IS IT?

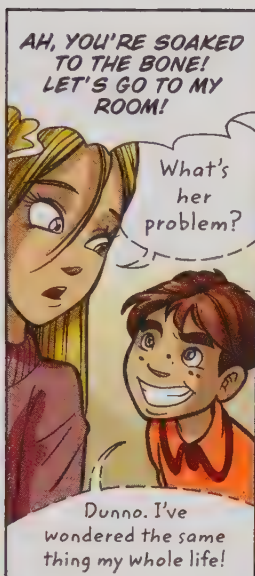
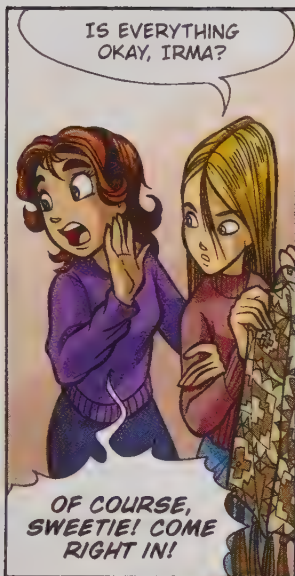
EEP!

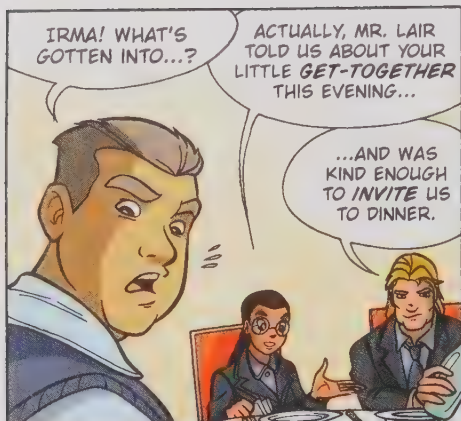


HI, CORNELIA.
YOU'RE SOAKING WET.
WHY DIDN'T YOU USE YOUR
UMBRELLA?



I DIDN'T THINK
I NEEDED ONE
A SECOND
AGO!

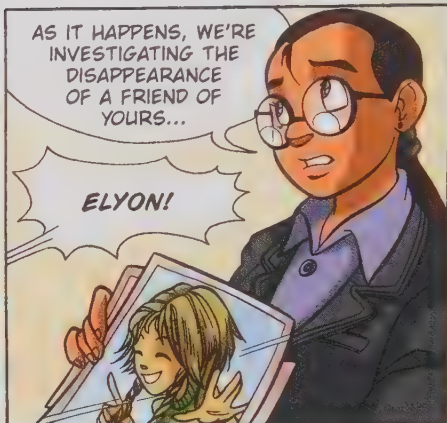




IRMA! WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO...?

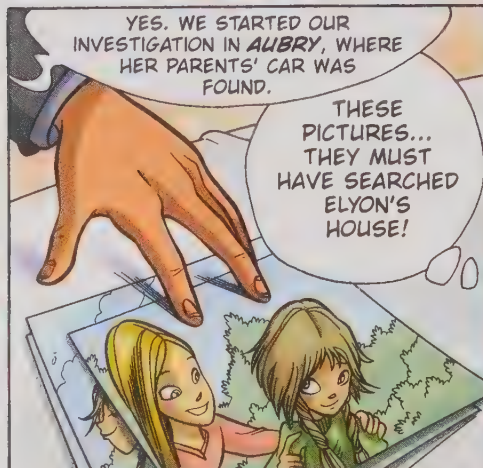
ACTUALLY, MR. LAIR TOLD US ABOUT YOUR LITTLE **GET-TOGETHER** THIS EVENING...

...AND WAS KIND ENOUGH TO **INVITE** US TO DINNER.



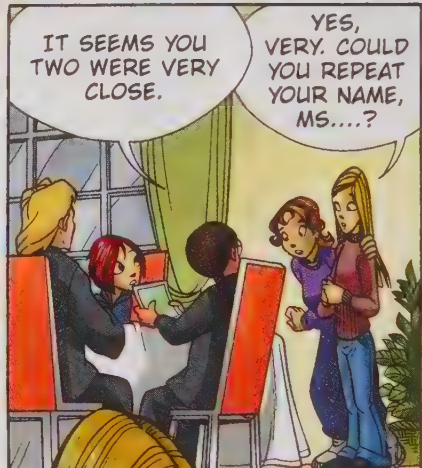
AS IT HAPPENS, WE'RE INVESTIGATING THE DISAPPEARANCE OF A FRIEND OF YOURS...

ELYON!



YES. WE STARTED OUR INVESTIGATION IN **AUBRY**, WHERE HER PARENTS' CAR WAS FOUND.

THESE PICTURES... THEY MUST HAVE SEARCHED **ELYON'S** HOUSE!



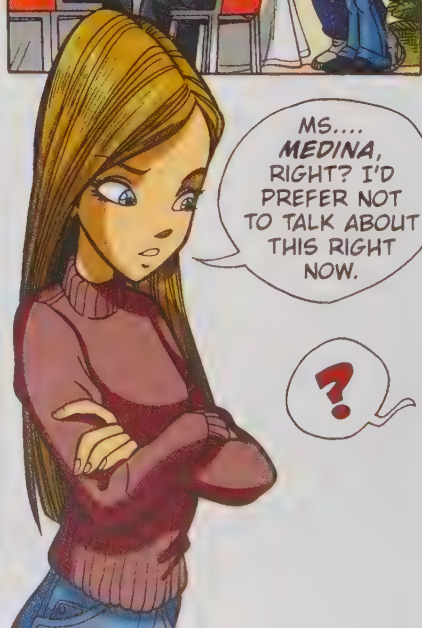
IT SEEMS YOU TWO WERE VERY CLOSE.

YES, VERY. COULD YOU REPEAT YOUR NAME, MS....?



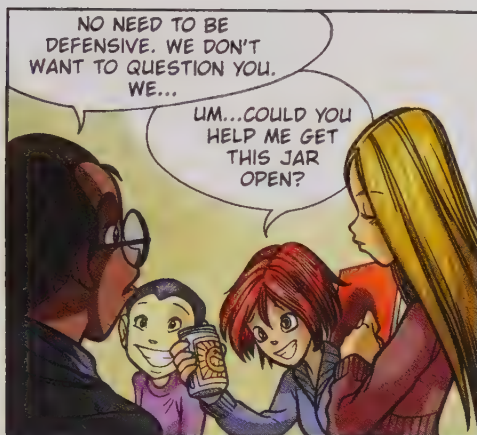
CALL ME **MARIA**. THIS IS **JOEL**. OUR FRIENDS CALL US "BIG GUY AND SMALL FRY."

I CAN'T IMAGINE WHY.



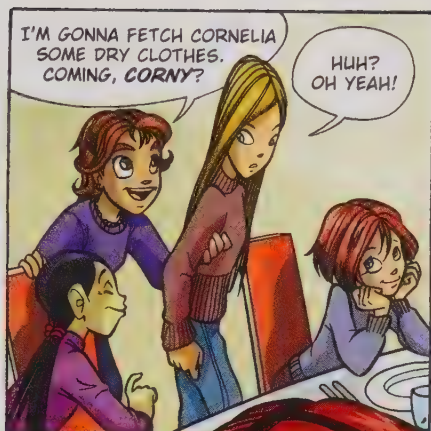
MS.... **MEDINA**, RIGHT? I'D PREFER NOT TO TALK ABOUT THIS RIGHT NOW.

?



NO NEED TO BE DEFENSIVE. WE DON'T WANT TO QUESTION YOU. WE...

UM...COULD YOU HELP ME GET THIS JAR OPEN?



I'M GONNA FETCH CORNELIA SOME DRY CLOTHES. COMING, CORNY?

HUH? OH YEAH!



AH-CHOO!

HEAR THAT? SHE'S PROBABLY CATCHING A COLD. GO AHEAD AND START WITHOUT US. BYE-BYE!



SO, MR. LAIR SAYS YOU'RE AN EXPERT IN PEDAGOGY, RIGHT?

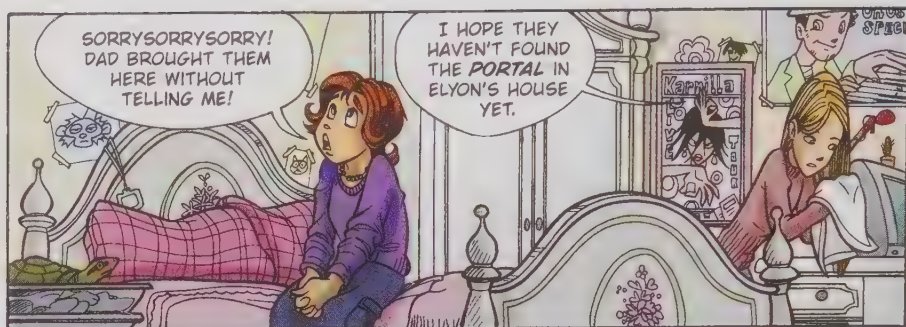


NOT EXACTLY, WILL. I WORK IN **CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY**.

OH, OKAY! WHAT ABOUT YOU, MR. McTIENNAN?

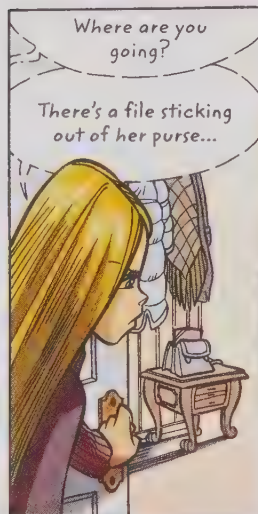


I DEAL WITH... **EVERYTHING ELSE.**



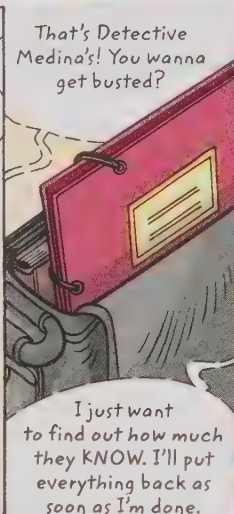
SORRYSORRYSORRY!
DAD BROUGHT THEM
HERE WITHOUT
TELLING ME!

I HOPE THEY
HAVEN'T FOUND
THE **PORTAL** IN
ELYON'S HOUSE
YET.



Where are you
going?

There's a file sticking
out of her purse...



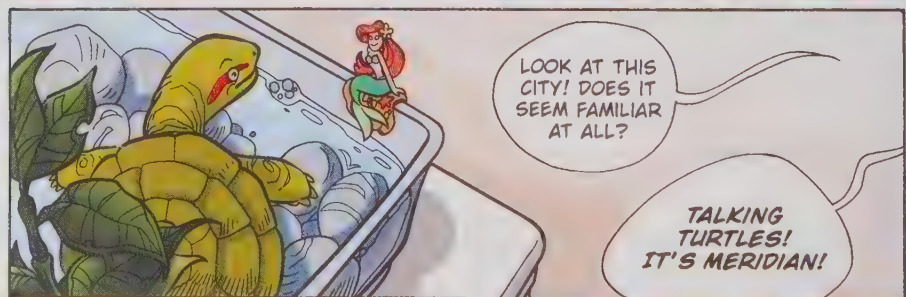
That's Detective
Medina's! You wanna
get busted?

I just want
to find out how much
they **KNOW**. I'll put
everything back as
soon as I'm done.



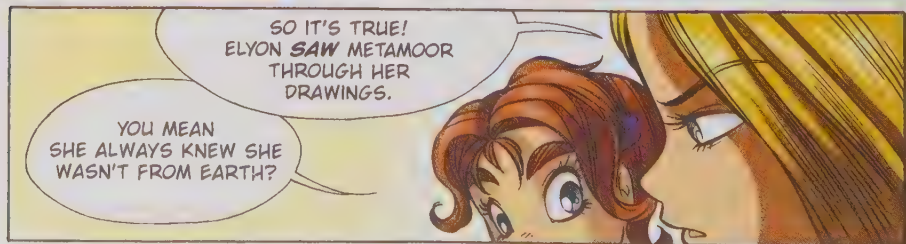
LOOK! THESE ARE
ELYON'S DRAWINGS!
SHE MADE THESE
WHEN SHE WAS
LITTLE.

MEDINA'S A
PSYCHOLOGIST.
SHE MUST WANT
TO STUDY THEM.
SO WHAT?



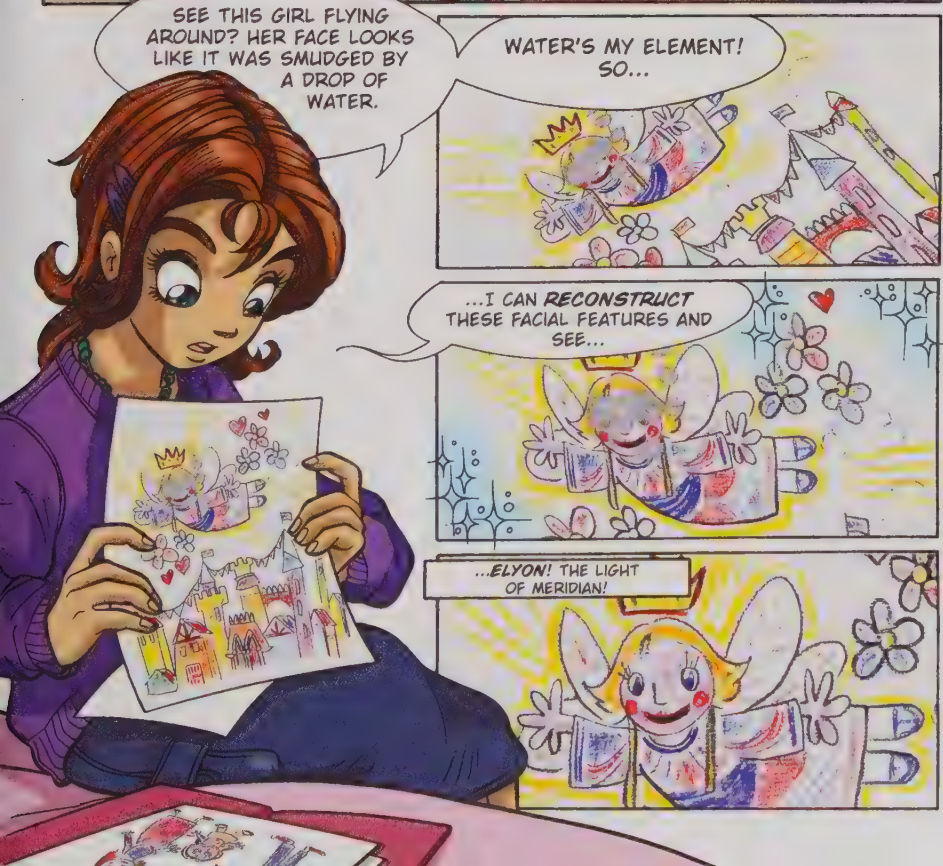
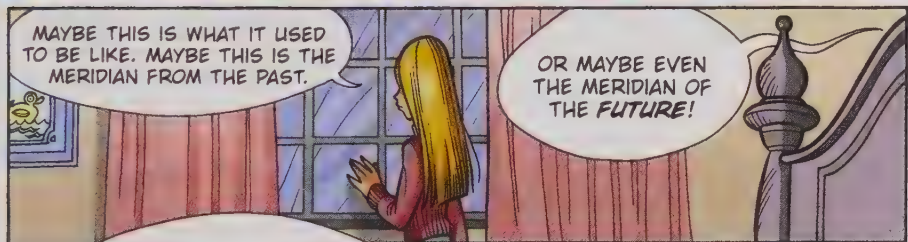
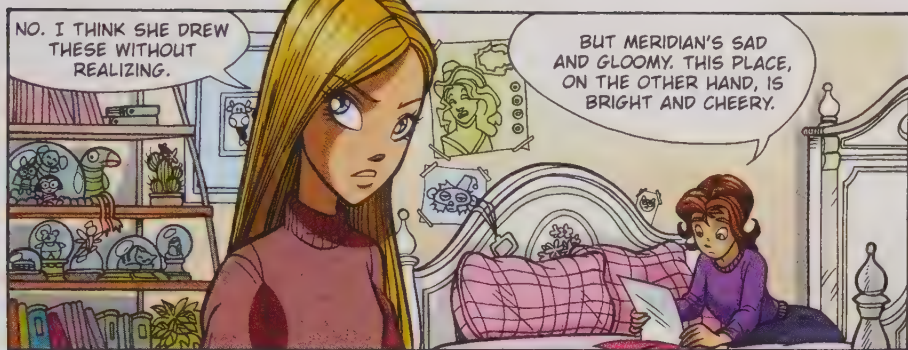
LOOK AT THIS
CITY! DOES IT
SEEM FAMILIAR
AT ALL?

**TALKING
TURTLES!
IT'S MERIDIAN!**



SO IT'S TRUE!
ELYON **SAW** METAMOOR
THROUGH HER
DRAWINGS.

YOU MEAN
SHE ALWAYS KNEW SHE
WASN'T FROM EARTH?



The next morning, Will wakes up with a start! She'd been dreaming about Irma, Cornelia, Elyon, and...

ALARM CLOCK! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

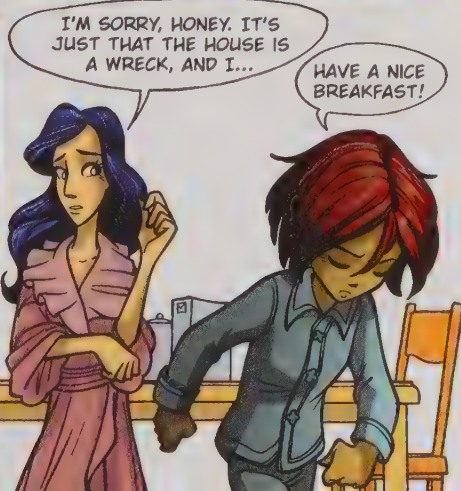
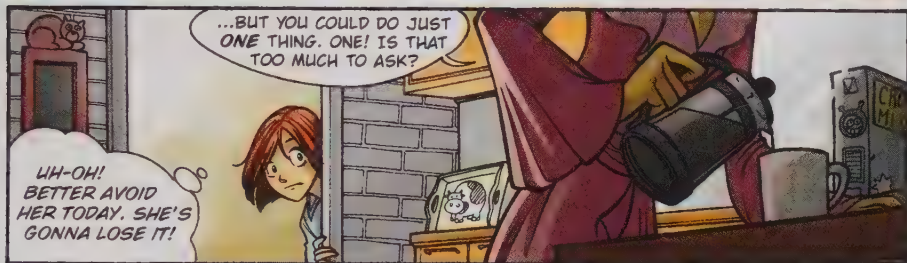
Your DREAMS, Will! Must be all that rich food you ate last night!

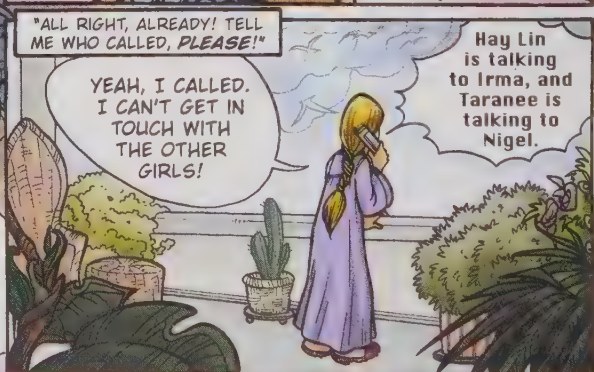
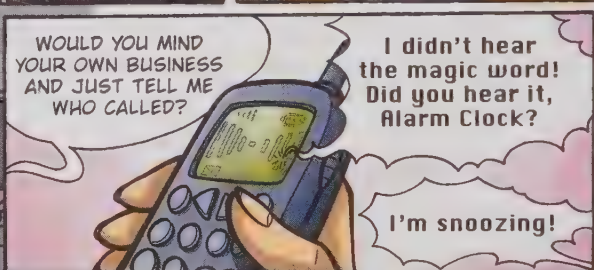
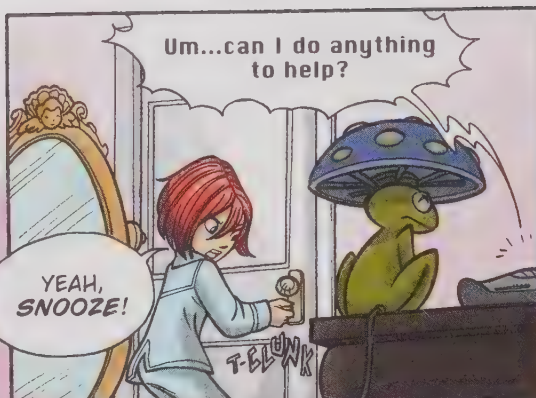
OH, SO YOU'RE A SPY? WANT ME TO PUT YOUR BATTERIES INTO YOUR FROG-SHAPED COMPETITOR?

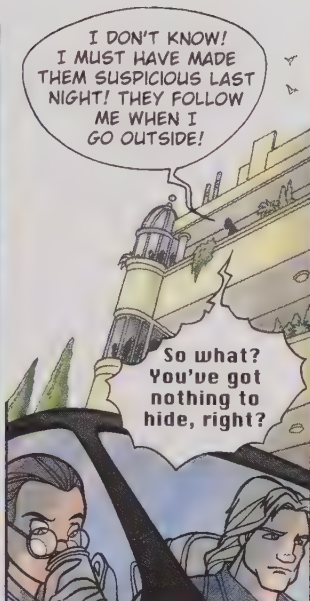
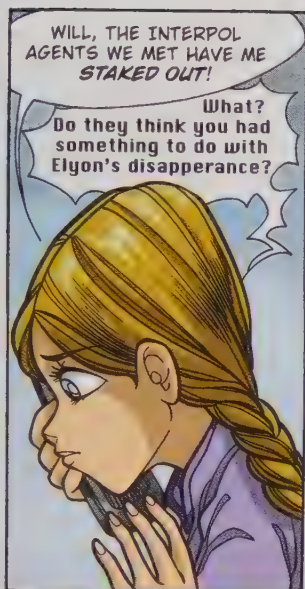
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU'D MANAGE TO FIND IT IN THIS MESS!

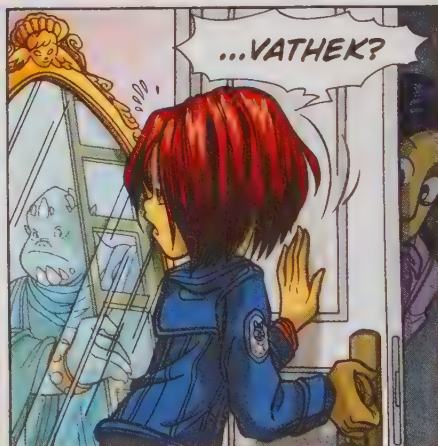
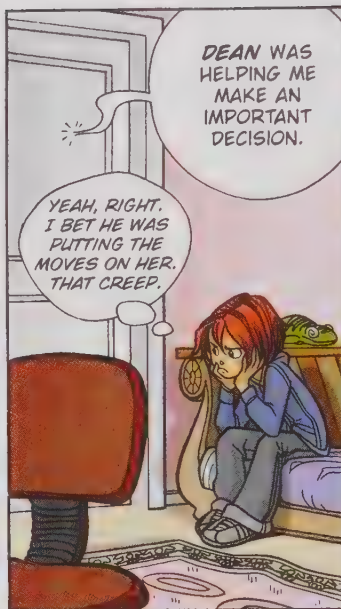
M-MOM! H-HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN THERE?

LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT YOU'RE SO TIRED, YOU'RE TALKING TO YOURSELF. COME ON. BREAKFAST IS READY.











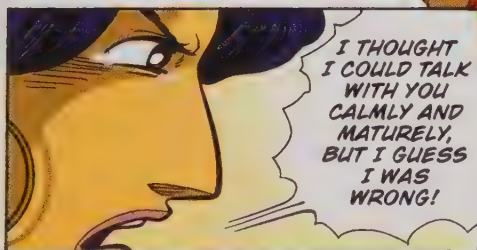
DID I PICK
A BAD TIME,
GUARDIAN?

Bad time,
bad place, and bad
entrance, you
big ape!

HEY!
WHAT...?

STUMP

WILL!
IS THIS
SOME
KIND OF
JOKE?



I THOUGHT
I COULD TALK
WITH YOU
CALMLY AND
MATURELY,
BUT I GUESS
I WAS
WRONG!

WHATDOIDO?
WHATDOIDO?
WHAT DO I
DO?

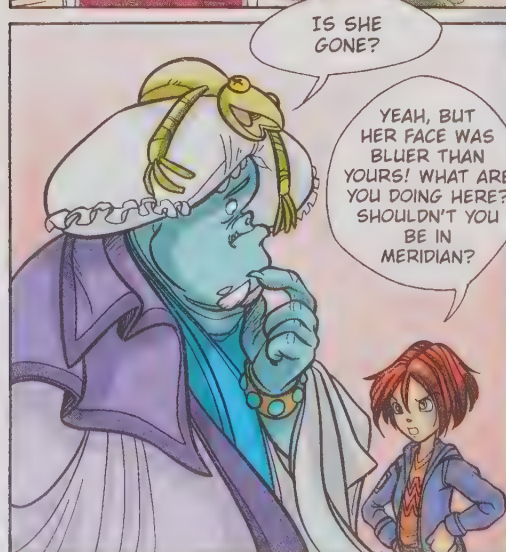
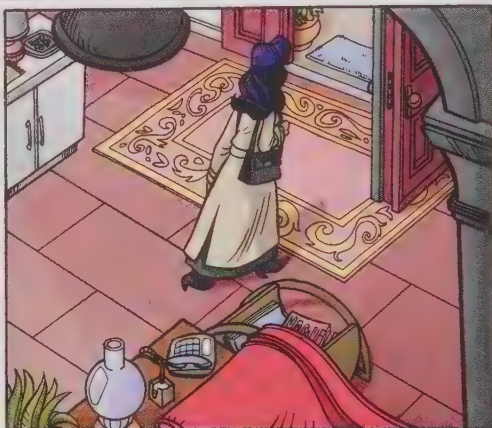


WELL, YOU'D
BETTER PREPARE TO
LISTEN, BECAUSE
I'M COMING
IN...

WOW!
WORKING
HARD, I
SEE.



YEAH...
THAT IS—NO!
UM...I MEAN,
I STILL HAVE
TO PUT A FEW
THINGS
AWAY.



"SHE CAME TO US AT NIGHT, RISKING HER OWN LIFE AND BRAVING THE UNDERGROUND WORLD OF THE INFINITE CITY."

IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR CALEB, HE'S RECRUITING REBELS IN YOUR NAME!

I'M HERE TO BEG YOU, VATHEK. PLEASE, I NEED YOU TO FREE MY ADOPTIVE PARENTS!

I KNOW I'VE DISOWNED THEM, BUT I'VE ALSO SEEN WHERE THEY'RE LOCKED UP. IT'S HORRIBLE!

THAT PRISON IS YOUR BROTHER'S DOING—HE CONFINES THOSE WHO OPPOSE HIM!

THEY'RE SUFFERING! I CAN SENSE IT! THEY'LL NEVER SURVIVE TO MY CORONATION.

NO ONE CAN BREAK INTO THE PRISON, NOT EVEN ME! YOU SHOULD ASK THE GUARDIANS FOR HELP.

EXCEPT FOR CORNELIA, THEY HATE ME. THEY'D NEVER HELP.

REALLY? I'M NOT EXACTLY A GENIUS...

...BUT IT'S EASY TO SEE THAT IF YOU'VE COME ALL THE WAY HERE, ELUDING PHOBOS'S CONTROL, YOU DON'T TRUST HIM EITHER.

PERHAPS THE MOMENT HAS COME TO BELIEVE IN SOMEONE ELSE, LIGHT OF MERIDIAN!

"THUS, ELYON CHOSE YOU, THE GUARDIANS OF THE VEIL. HER FORMER FRIENDS!"

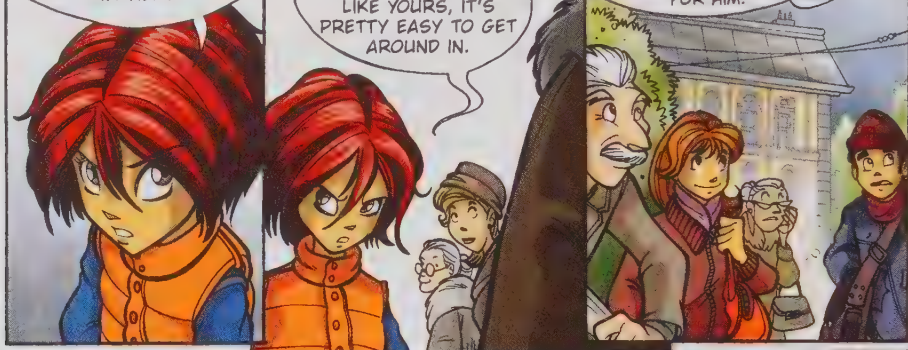
OKAY, LET'S JUST SAY THAT'S ALL TRUE. WHY COME TO *ME*, VATHEK?

I'VE ALWAYS FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO GET MY BEARINGS IN YOUR CONFUSING CITY...

HEATHERFIELD ISN'T *MY* CITY. AND LIKE YOURS, IT'S PRETTY EASY TO GET AROUND IN.

I ONLY REMEMBER HOW TO GET TO YOUR PLACE. CEDRIC KEPT AN EYE ON YOU THERE A LOT.

I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW YOU MANAGED TO *HIDE* WHEN YOU WORKED FOR HIM.



HE WAS A MASTER OF DECEPTION! HE DIDN'T NEED SUCH RIDICULOUS MASQUERADES!

HEY! THESE CLOTHES WERE ALL I COULD FIND! JUST DEAL WITH IT, OKAY?

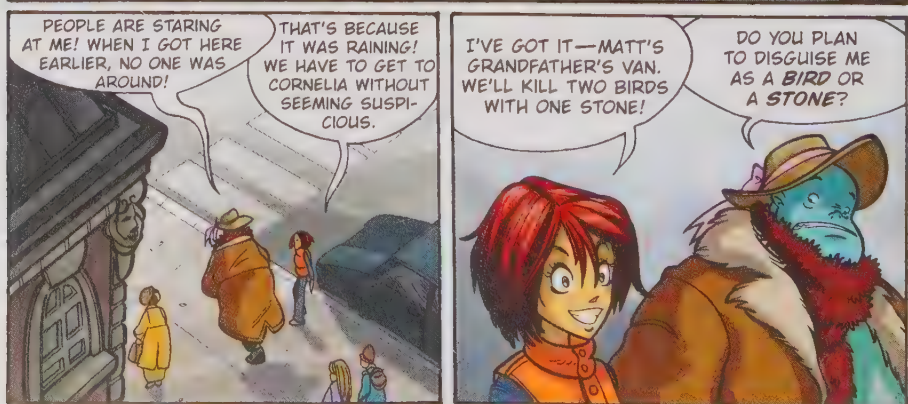


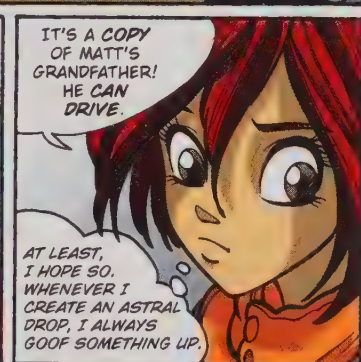
PEOPLE ARE STARING AT ME! WHEN I GOT HERE EARLIER, NO ONE WAS AROUND!

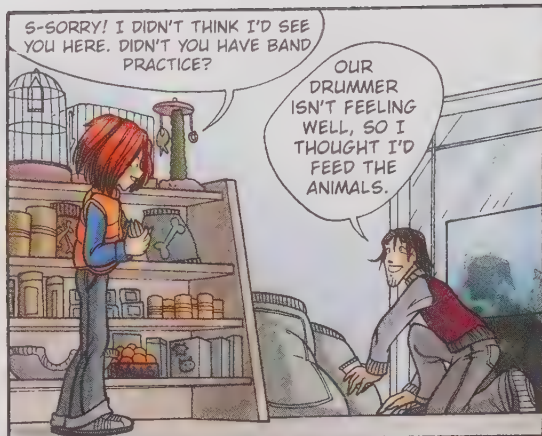
THAT'S BECAUSE IT WAS RAINING! WE HAVE TO GET TO CORNELIA WITHOUT SEEMING SUSPICIOUS.

I'VE GOT IT—MATT'S GRANDFATHER'S VAN. WE'LL KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE!

DO YOU PLAN TO DISGUISE ME AS A *BIRD* OR A *STONE*?

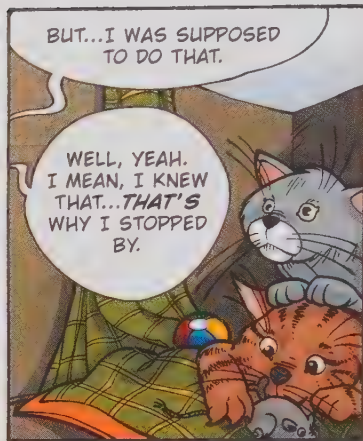






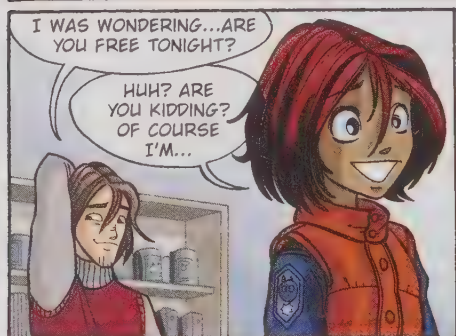
S-SORRY! I DIDN'T THINK I'D SEE YOU HERE. DIDN'T YOU HAVE BAND PRACTICE?

OUR DRUMMER ISN'T FEELING WELL, SO I THOUGHT I'D FEED THE ANIMALS.



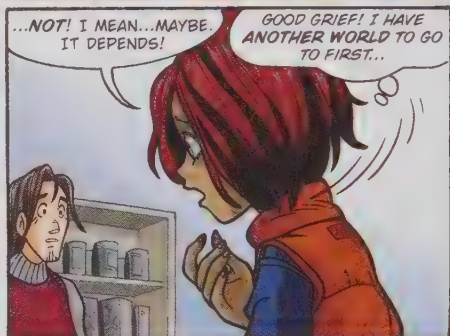
BUT...I WAS SUPPOSED TO DO THAT.

WELL, YEAH. I MEAN, I KNEW THAT...**THAT'S** WHY I STOPPED BY.



I WAS WONDERING...ARE YOU FREE TONIGHT?

HUH? ARE YOU KIDDING? OF COURSE I'M...



...NOT! I MEAN...MAYBE. IT DEPENDS!

GOOD GRIEF! I HAVE ANOTHER WORLD TO GO TO FIRST...



NO, YEAH, MAYBE, IT DEPENDS...! YOU'RE ALWAYS SO MYSTERIOUS AND...HUH?



THAT'S MY GRANDFATHER! HE SAID HE WOULDN'T BE HERE UNTIL LATER.

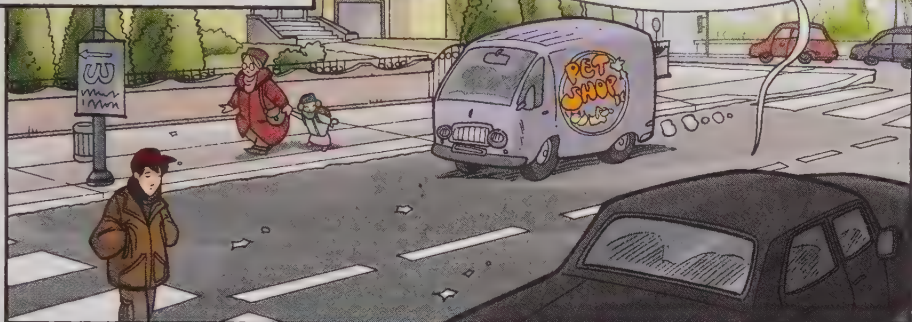
UM...WE... WE CAME HERE TOGETHER!



ACTUALLY, WE HAVE AN **ERRAND** TO RUN. YEAH. WE HAVE TO... UM...TAKE...THE DOG BACK HOME...

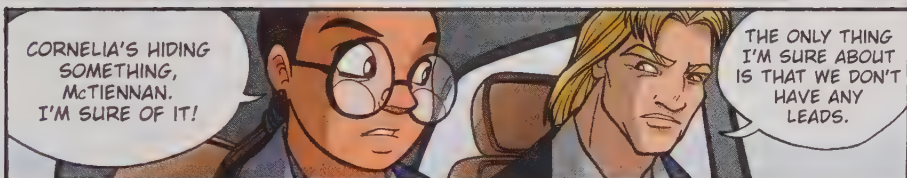
A MILLION EXCUSES
LATER, IN FRONT OF
CORNELIA'S APARTMENT...

I'M STARTING TO THINK
YOU'RE MISTAKEN, MEDINA.



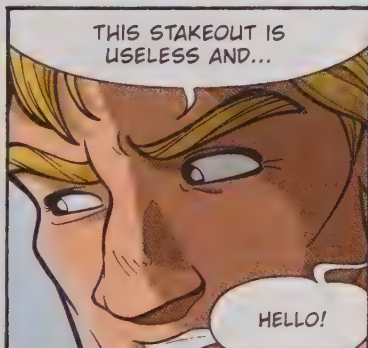
CORNELIA'S HIDING
SOMETHING,
McTIENNAN.
I'M SURE OF IT!

THE ONLY THING
I'M SURE ABOUT
IS THAT WE DON'T
HAVE ANY
LEADS.



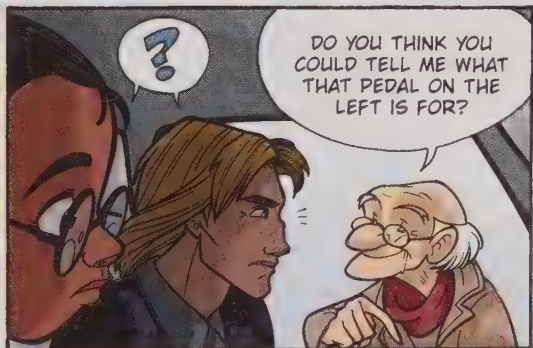
THIS STAKEOUT IS
USELESS AND...

HELLO!



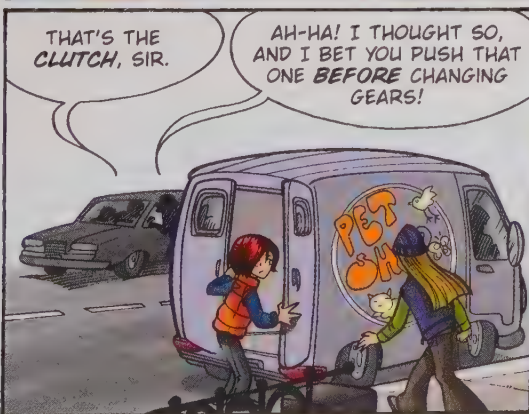
?

DO YOU THINK YOU
COULD TELL ME WHAT
THAT PEDAL ON THE
LEFT IS FOR?



THAT'S THE
CLUTCH, SIR.

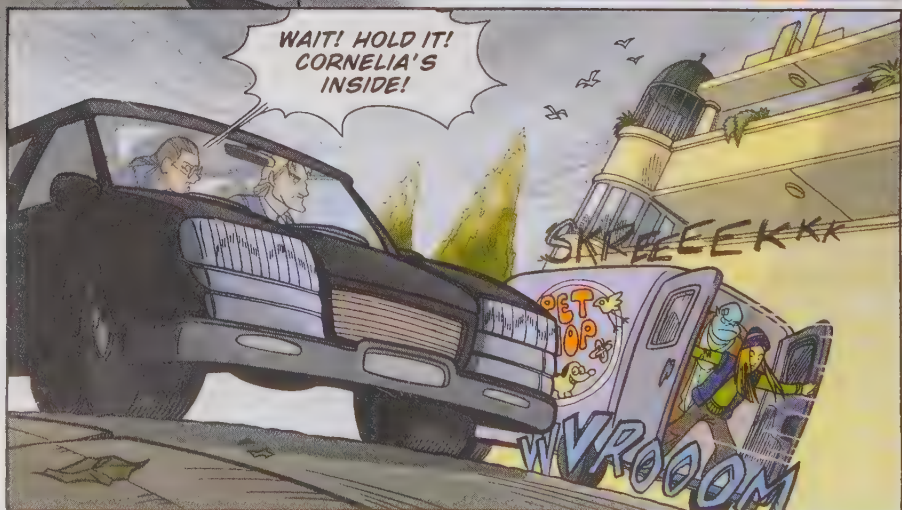
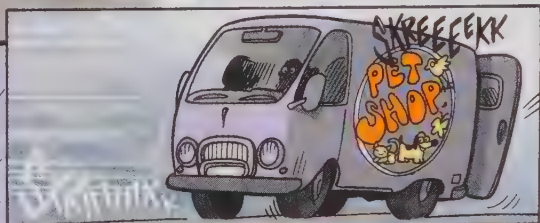
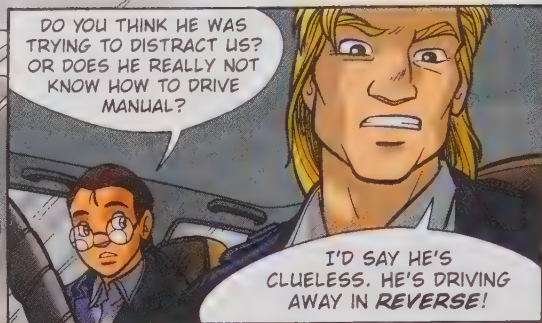
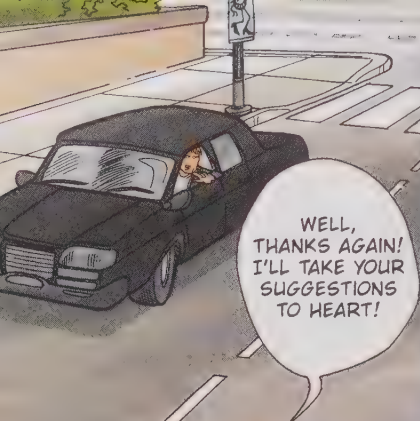
AH-HA! I THOUGHT SO,
AND I BET YOU PUSH THAT
ONE BEFORE CHANGING
GEARS!



What on earth...?

No questions!
Just GET IN!





WHAT ARE
YOU WAITING FOR?
FOLLOW THEM!

I'M TRYING!
I'M TRYING!

VRRRR
VRRRR

NOTHING! THE DARN CAR
WON'T START! PULL THAT
LEVER. I'LL CHECK
UNDER THE HOOD.

McTIENNAN! WE NEED TO
FOLLOW THAT VAN! THERE'S
SOMETHING ODD ABOUT IT.

APART FROM
THE OLD GUY AT THE
WHEEL AND CORNELIA?

I COULD HAVE SWORN
I SAW SOME SORT OF...
GIANT IN THE
BACK WITH HER.

CLUNK

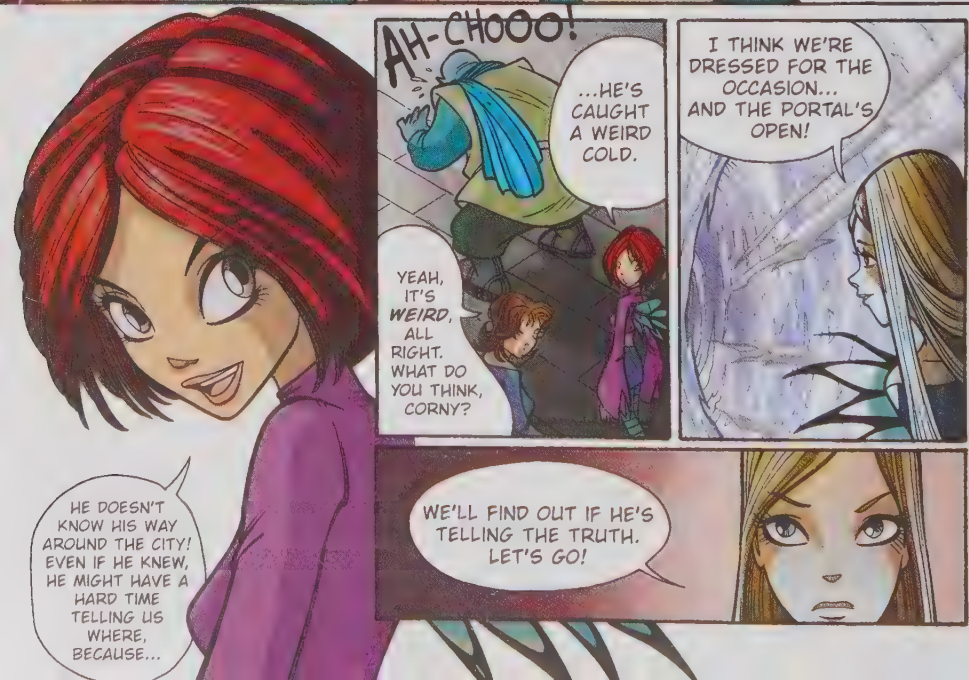
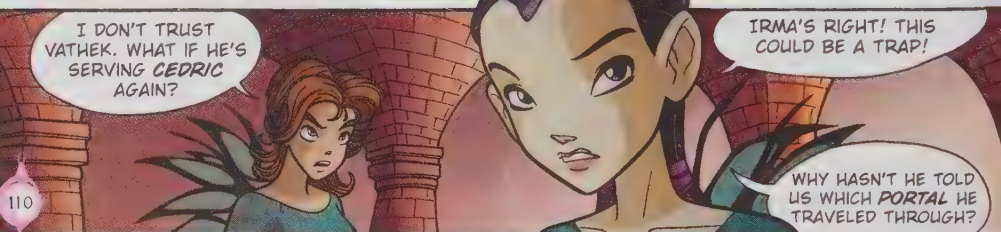
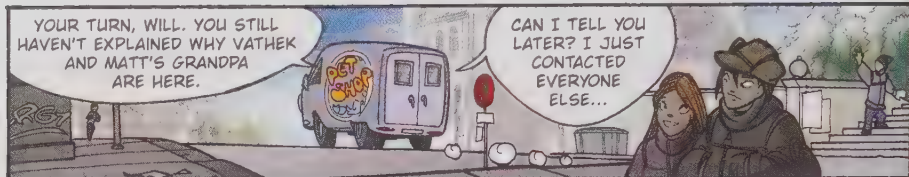
SLAM

WHAT THE...? I'VE
HEARD OF AXLE-
TREES, BUT THIS
IS...

"...A JUNGLE!"

YOU DID
WHAAAT?

THERE WAS A LITTLE
PLANT SPROUTING
FROM THE ASPHALT
UNDER THE
CAR. I JUST
HELPED IT
GROW.



"MERIDIAN, HERE WE
COME!"

THE WRETCHED
PRISON SITS
ATOP A HILL,
DEMANDING
RESPECT AND
INSTILLING FEAR.

TODAY, THOUGH, THE
ONES WHO FEEL FEAR
ARE THE GUARDS OF THE
DISMAL PLACE...

WHAT'S GOING
ON? WHY ARE THE
SCUTTLEERS SO
NERVOUS?

THE
THUNDER, SIR!
THOSE STRANGE
EXPLOSIONS!
THEY SEEM TO BE
COMING...

"...FROM
UNDERGROUND!"

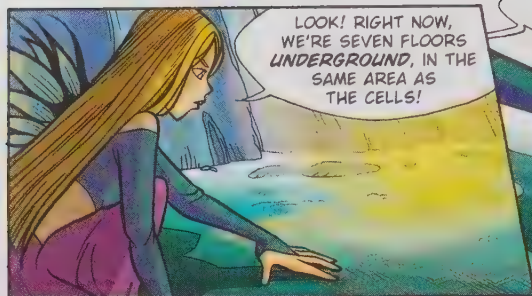
I CAD GO EDDY FURDER
DAN DIS, GUARDIADS.
->SNIFF-> I MADE
YOU A MAB.

WITH THOSE
SNEEZES, YOU'D
PROBABLY END
UP ALERTING
PHOBOS'S
ENTIRE ARMY,
VATHEK!

ACCORDING TO
YOUR DRAWING,
THERE'S A REAL
MAZE OF
TUNNELS
DOWN HERE.

THIS PLACE IS PROBABLY
CRAWLING WITH
BUGS! WE COULD BE
HERE FOR DAYS!

MAYBE NOT.



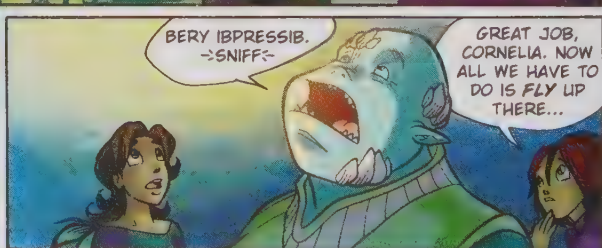
LOOK! RIGHT NOW,
WE'RE SEVEN FLOORS
UNDERGROUND, IN THE
SAME AREA AS
THE CELLS!



AND REMEMBER,
EARTH...



...IS MY
ELEMENT.



BERY IBPRESSIB.
->SNIFF->

GREAT JOB,
CORNELIA. NOW
ALL WE HAVE TO
DO IS FLY UP
THERE...

"...AND FIND ELYON'S PARENTS!"



WELL? IS THAT
SNAKE STILL
THERE?

YES, DEAR.
HE'S TALKING
TO THE
GUARD!



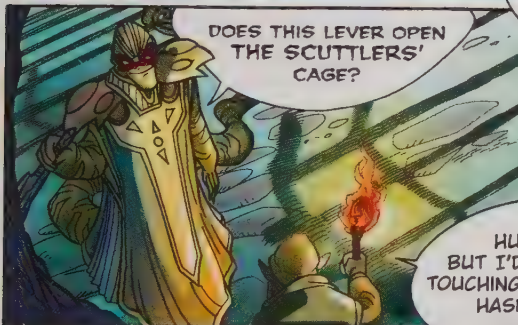
I'M SCARED! CEDRIC'S DANGEROUS! DID HE COME HERE FOR US?

MAYBE. HE'S POINTING RIGHT AT US!



I...I BEG YOUR PARDON, SIR?

YOU HEARD ME! OPEN THAT CELL AND RELEASE THE PRISONERS!



DOES THIS LEVER OPEN THE SCUTTLERS' CAGE?

HUH? YES, SIR. BUT I'D ADVISE AGAINST TOUCHING IT. THE MONSTER HASN'T EATEN YET.

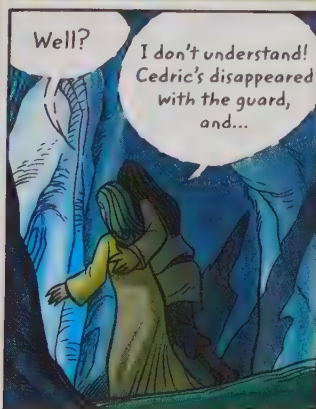


POOR CREATURE! SEE TO IT THAT HE GETS A MEAL RIGHT AWAY!



THOMAS— THE DOOR! SOMEONE'S OPENING IT.

YES. STAY CLOSE TO ME, ELEANOR.



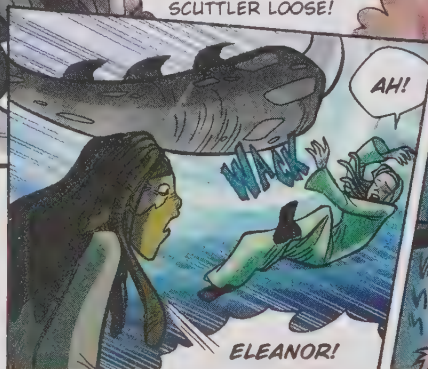
Well?

I don't understand! Cedric's disappeared with the guard, and...





MAY THE
LIGHT PROTECT
US! THEY'VE LET A
SCUTTLE LOOSE!

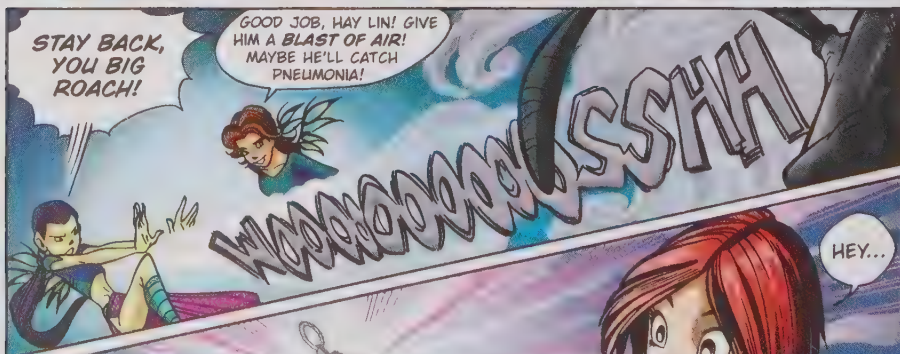


AH!

ELEANOR!



SEE WHAT
I MEAN?
I TOLD YOU
THIS PLACE
WAS FULL
OF BUGS!



STAY BACK,
YOU BIG
ROACH!

GOOD JOB, HAY LIN! GIVE
HIM A BLAST OF AIR!
MAYBE HE'LL CATCH
PNEUMONIA!

SSHHH

HEY...





SHORTLY AFTERWARD,
A COMMOTION RUNS
THROUGH THE STREETS
OF MERIDIAN...

HURRY UP, HALGART!
CALL THE OTHERS. CALL
EVERYONE!

I'M GLAD I LEFT
THE PALACE.
SOMETHING
STRANGE IS
HAPPENING!

ELYON SEES SOMETHING SHE
NEVER WOULD'VE EXPECTED...

GET THE LITTLE ONES INSIDE!
IT'S AN UPRISING!
THE PRISON'S
OPEN!

...THE SOLDIERS, TRYING TO
QUELL THE CROWDS...

...AND HER FORMER FRIENDS,
TRIUMPHANTLY CARRIED ON
THE PRISONERS' SHOULDERS.

AND IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS
UNSPEAKABLE CONFUSION...

YES, IT'S
THEM! BUT SHE
LOOKS LIKE SHE'S
IN PAIN. WHAT DID
THEY DO TO HER
IN THERE?

THIS AREA IS OFF-LIMITS!
STAY BACK, LOWLIFE!

MY BROTHER'S
DOWN THERE!
PLEASE BELIEVE
ME!

OH, I BELIEVE YOU, DOG!
BUT IF YOU DON'T
LEAVE, I'LL
LOCK YOU UP
WHERE YOU
BELONG—
PRISON!

SHATTZZZ

No!



NO!

WHAT...?

THAT NASTY
PLACE IS A
HORRIBLE...
MISTAKE!

UNTIL IN A FLASH, SHE
REMEMBERS THOSE WORDS...

YOU CAN
ERASE ANY
MISTAKE!

IT'S A
MISTAKE!

ELYON'S MIND IS CLOUDED WITH
SHOCK, DESPERATION, OUTRAGE...

...AND THAT SIMPLE GESTURE...

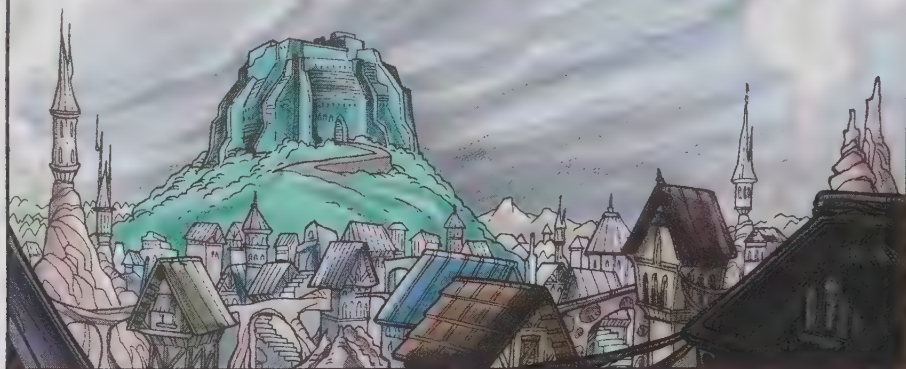
A GESTURE SHE NOW REPEATS MECHANICALLY,
WITHOUT THINKING...

ANY...

...MISTAKE!

FRUSH

IN A SINGLE, FLEETING MOMENT,
MERIDIAN'S PRISON DISAPPEARS,
BY ELYON'S WILL...



FOR THE WOMAN WHO, DEEP IN HER
HEART, SHE CONSIDERS HER MOTHER...

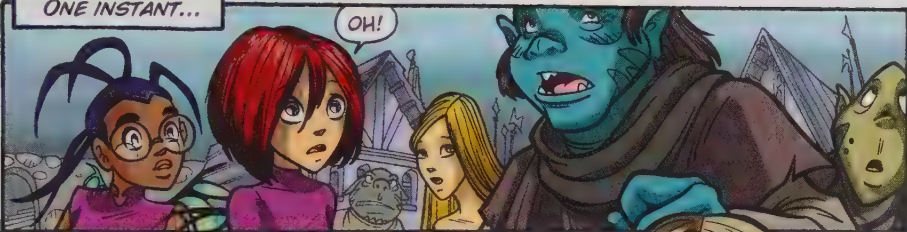


FOR THE CITIZENS SHE'S
BEGIN TO CONSIDER HER
OWN PEOPLE...

FOREVER...



ONE INSTANT...



OH!

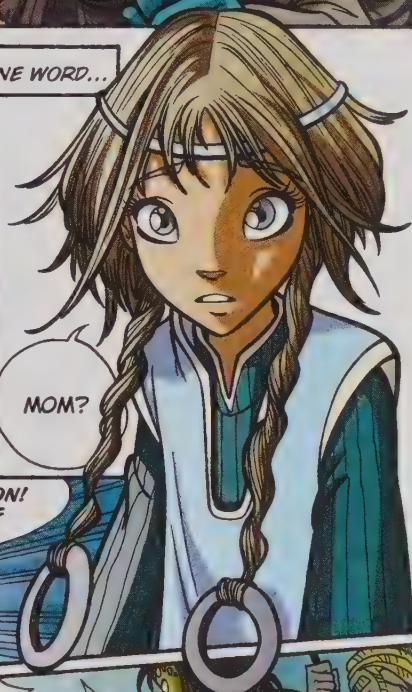
ONE GLANCE...

ELYON?



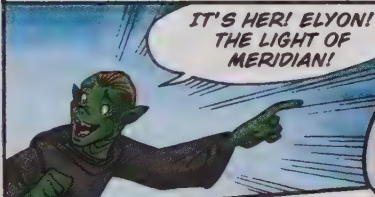
ONE WORD...

MOM?



SOMETIMES,
IT TAKES
VERY LITTLE
TO CHANGE
ONE'S
DESTINY...

IT'S HER! ELYON!
THE LIGHT OF
MERIDIAN!



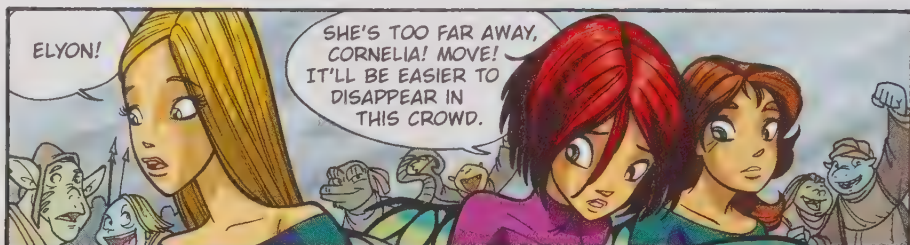
...OR DIVIDE THEM.

DID YOU SEE THAT?
IT'S HER! SHE
DESTROYED THE
PRISON!



LONG LIVE
THE LIGHT OF
MERIDIAN!

SHE'S
COME FOR US!
FOR US!



EPILOGUE 1: MERIDIAN, INSIDE
 PHOBOS'S CASTLE...

I FAILED, MY LORD!
 I DID NOT SUCCEED
 IN ELIMINATING THE
 TWO TRAITORS.

I KNOW, CEDRIC.
 I KNOW ALL
 ABOUT IT.

I BEG YOU. TELL ME HOW
 ELYON MADE THE PRISON
 DISAPPEAR!

HER POWER IS
 IMMENSE! I
 MUST HAVE IT FOR
 MYSELF!

THAT IS WHY IT'S
 TIME TO OFFICIALLY
 ANNOUNCE HER
 CORONATION!

EPILOGUE 2: HEATHERFIELD,
 IN ELYON'S BASEMENT...

MERIDIAN'S
 DEFINITELY CHANGING.

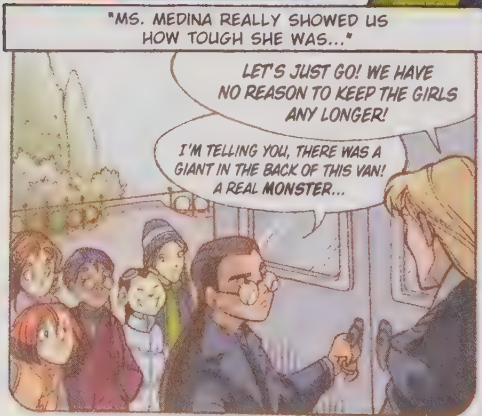
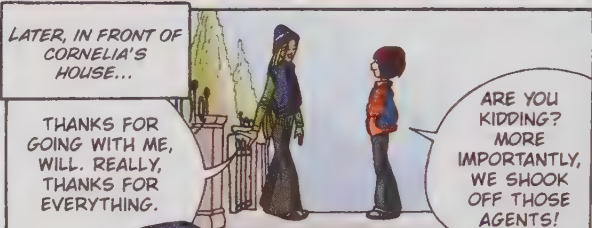
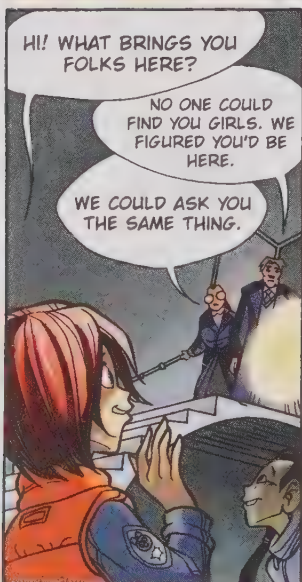
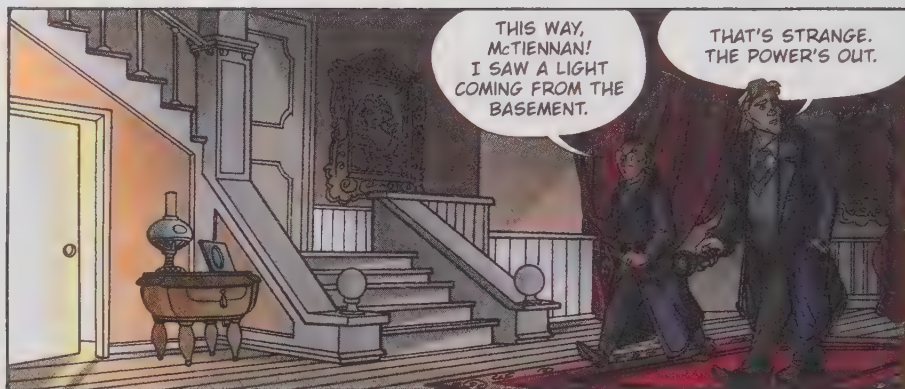
SO I WASN'T WRONG
 ABOUT ELYON! SHE
 NEEDS TO UNDER-
 STAND WHAT'S GOING
 ON. SHE
 NEEDS US!

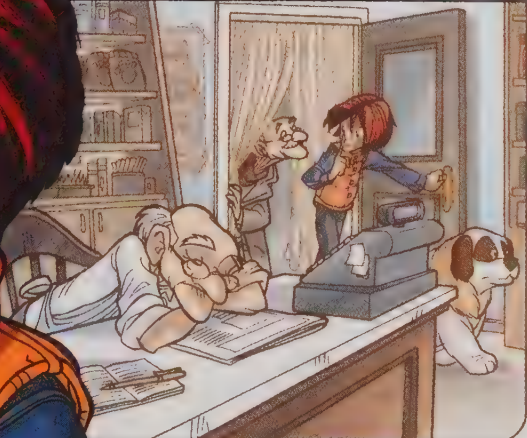
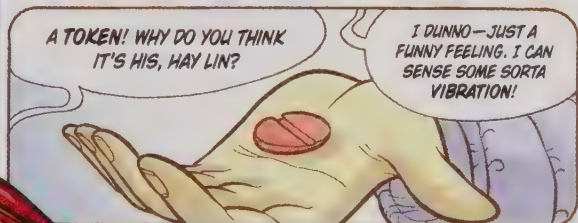
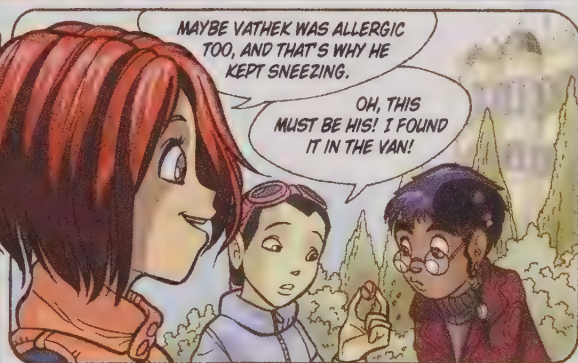
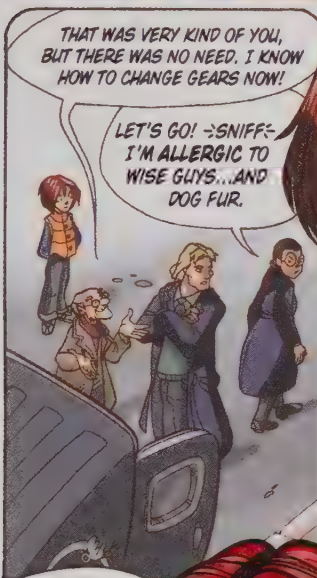
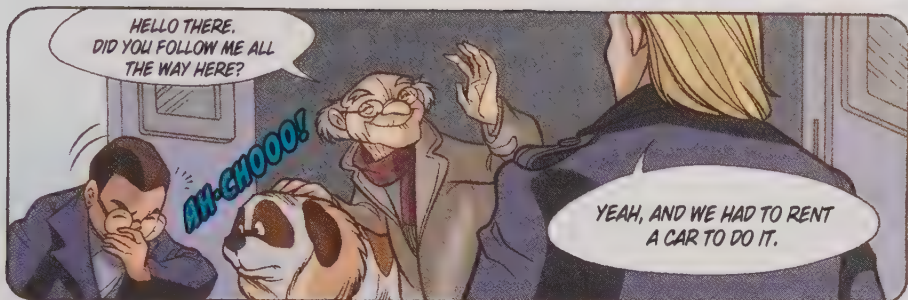
WHAT ARE YOU DOING,
 CORNELIA?

MAKING A WALL
 TO HIDE THE PORTAL.
 WE MIGHT NEED TO
 USE IT AGAIN.

WITHOUT
 THE MAP OF
 THE PORTALS,
 THIS IS THE
 ONLY ONE WE
 KNOW ABOUT,
 AND...

SHHHH!
 Someone's
 coming.
 We'd better
 CHANGE
 BACK,
 QUICK!





INSTINCTIVELY,
THE ASTRAL DROP
RETURNED TO HIS
TWIN'S BODY...

...WHICH GAVE
HIM A SENSE OF
EVERYTHING THAT
HAD HAPPENED.

ODD DREAM...
YOU WERE THERE! SO
WAS A BIG, BLUE GIANT
DRESSED AS A WOMAN.

IS THAT WHEN
YOU FOUND MATT'S
NOTE?

YUP!
A FORMAL
INVITATION TO THE
LODELYDAY, THE
COOLEST PLACE IN
THE WHOLE
CITY!

WILL, DID YOU NOTICE THAT
FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE WE
MET, WE'RE GETTING ALONG
PERFECTLY?

YEAH,
WE'RE REALLY
NOT ALL THAT
DIFFERENT. THIS
CITY ISN'T
SO BAD.

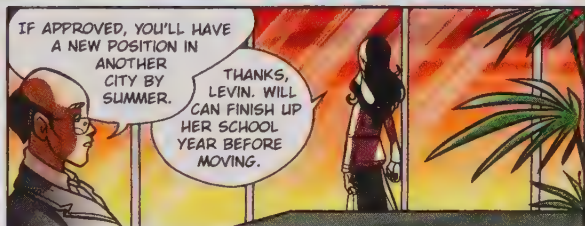
KNOW WHAT I THINK?
FROM NOW ON, THINGS
ARE GONNA JUST
KEEP GETTING
BETTER!

SIMULTECH, IN AN
INDUSTRIAL ZONE
IN HEATHERFIELD'S
OUTSKIRTS....

THIS COMPANY
CAN'T AFFORD
TO LOSE A GREAT
WORKER LIKE
YOU, SUSAN!

YOU'RE
NOT
LOSING ME.
I'M JUST
ASKING FOR
A TRANSFER!

SIMULTECH
INDUSTRIAL ZONE



Witch

Will Irma Harance Cornelia Hay Lin



THE CROWN OF LIGHT

“My search for her was long
and tomorrow her power
will be mine at last!”



KANDRAKAR.

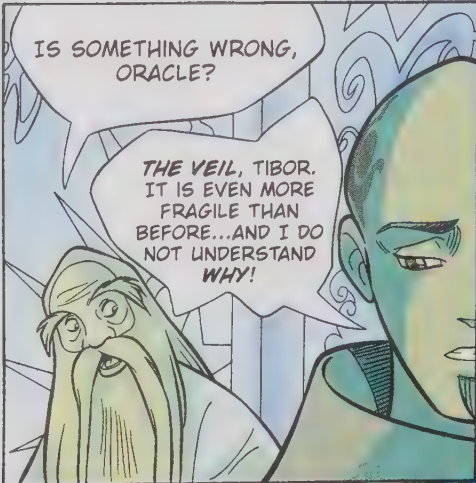
LONG AGO, THIS PLACE WAS
CREATED TO WATCH OVER
OTHER WORLDS
AND DIMENSIONS...

...A TASK THAT THE
ORACLE HAS NEVER
FAILED TO FULFILL.

ALTHOUGH HIS EYES
HAVE OBSERVED
BILLIONS OF LIVES,
NOTHING UPSETS HIM...

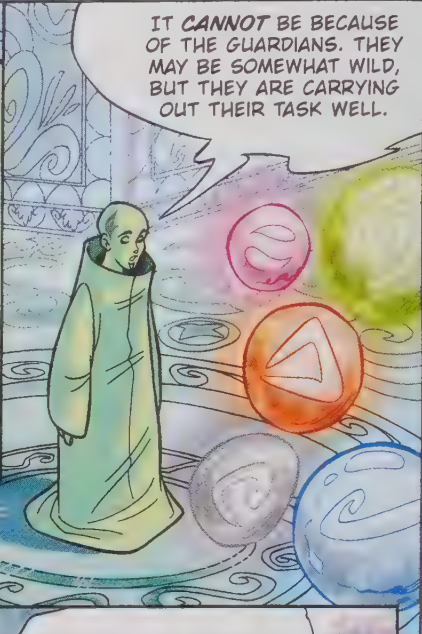
YET TODAY, THE
UNEXPECTED HAS
OCCURRED. HIS BROW
FURROWS WITH A
LINE OF CONCERN.

TODAY, FOR
THE FIRST TIME,
THE ORACLE
IS WORRIED.

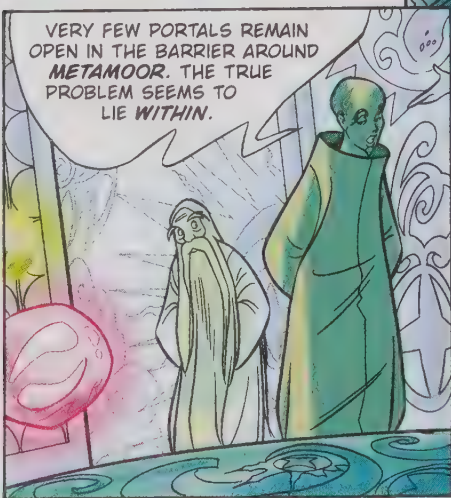


IS SOMETHING WRONG,
ORACLE?

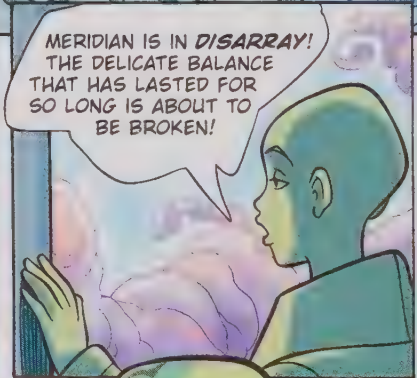
THE VEIL, TIBOR.
IT IS EVEN MORE
FRAGILE THAN
BEFORE...AND I DO
NOT UNDERSTAND
WHY!



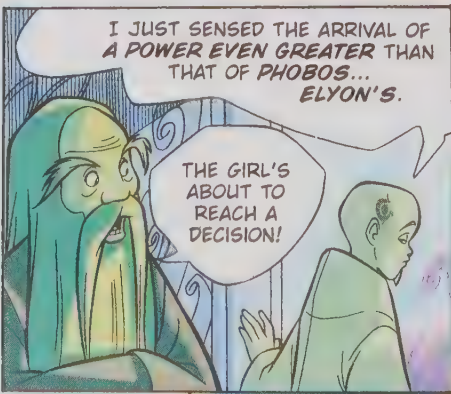
IT **CANNOT** BE BECAUSE
OF THE GUARDIANS. THEY
MAY BE SOMEWHAT WILD,
BUT THEY ARE CARRYING
OUT THEIR TASK WELL.



VERY FEW PORTALS REMAIN
OPEN IN THE BARRIER AROUND
METAMOOR. THE TRUE
PROBLEM SEEMS TO
LIE **WITHIN.**



MERIDIAN IS IN DISARRAY!
THE DELICATE BALANCE
THAT HAS LASTED FOR
SO LONG IS ABOUT TO
BE BROKEN!



I JUST SENSED THE ARRIVAL OF
A **POWER EVEN GREATER** THAN
THAT OF **PHOBOS...**
ELYON'S.

THE GIRL'S
ABOUT TO
REACH A
DECISION!



YES...
AND THAT IS
EXACTLY WHAT
FRIGHTENS ME.

MERIDIAN

HAVE YOU MADE
UP YOUR MIND,
YOUR
HIGHNESS?

I...I'M NOT
SURE. YOUR
GOWNS ARE SO
BEAUTIFUL! WAY
TOO BEAUTIFUL!

A SPECIAL DAY
CALLS FOR A
SPECIAL GOWN...

...AND YOUR CORONATION
WILL DEFINITELY BE
AN UNFORGETTABLE DAY
FOR THE ENTIRE
CITY!

I'LL THINK ABOUT IT
AND GET BACK TO YOU
TOMORROW, MASTER
JINK!

IF YOU WANT
MY OPINION...

...IF I DID,
I WOULD'VE
ASKED FOR IT.
WHERE'S
MY BROTHER?

PRINCE PHOBOS IS
MEETING WITH HIS
MURMURERS.

I SEE.

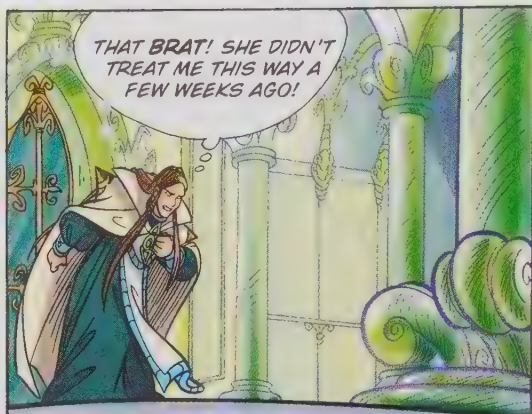
AH, LISTEN,
CEDRIC...

I NOTICED
THAT IN PUBLIC,
YOU CALL ME "YOUR
HIGHNESS"
...

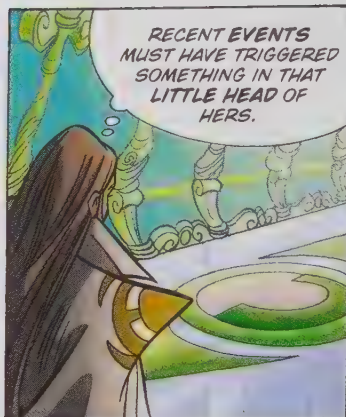
A COURTESY
WORTHY OF A
PERSON OF
YOUR RANK!

FINE. FROM NOW ON, I'D LIKE
YOU TO SHOW THE SAME
COURTESY IN PRIVATE
AS WELL.

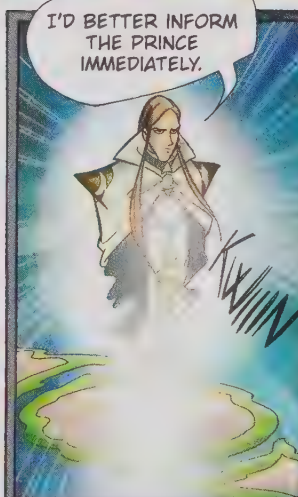
B-BUT...
OF COURSE. AS
YOU WISH, YOUR
HIGHNESS!



THAT BRAT! SHE DIDN'T
TREAT ME THIS WAY A
FEW WEEKS AGO!



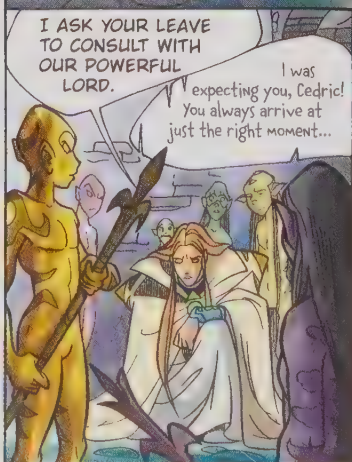
RECENT EVENTS
MUST HAVE TRIGGERED
SOMETHING IN THAT
LITTLE HEAD OF
HERS.



I'D BETTER INFORM
THE PRINCE
IMMEDIATELY.

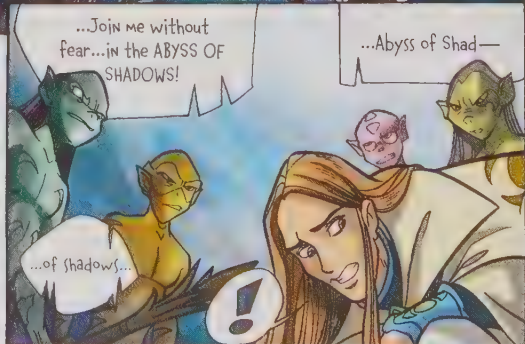


MY RESPECTS, ENLIGHTENED COURT
OF MURMURERS, VOICE AND EYES
OF THE PRINCE OF PRINCES!



I ASK YOUR LEAVE
TO CONSULT WITH
OUR POWERFUL
LORD.

I was
expecting you, Cedric!
You always arrive at
just the right moment...



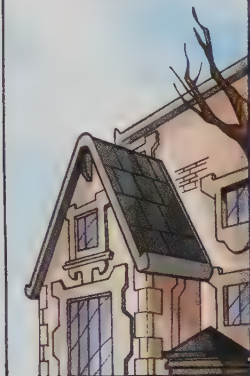
...Join me without
fear...in the ABYSS OF
SHADOWS!

...Abyss of Shad—

...of shadows...



MEANWHILE, A SPECIAL MEETING OCCURS AT MS. RUDOLPH'S HOUSE.



NO COOKIES THIS TIME?

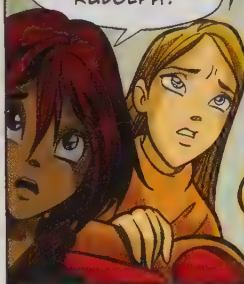
NO, GIRLS. THIS IS AN EMERGENCY MEETING. I'VE JUST RECEIVED ALARMING NEWS FROM MERIDIAN.

Is eating all you ever think about?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT? DID YOU GO TO METAMOOR?

REALLY, MS. RUDOLPH?



NO, CORNELIA. I CAME INTO **MENTAL CONTACT** WITH SOME ACQUAINTANCES WHO STILL LIVE THERE. A FEW DAYS AGO, ELYON'S **CORONATION** WAS ANNOUNCED.



WOW! OUR FRIEND'S ABOUT TO MAKE IT BIG! I'VE NEVER KNOWN A PRINCESS BEFORE!

...BUT I DON'T LIKE WHAT I HEARD AT ALL!



THE CITY IS **ABUZZ**! BOTH THE REBEL GROUPS AND THE CITIZENS OF MERIDIAN EXPECT A **GREAT DEAL** FROM ELYON...

BUT YOU'RE WORRIED THAT PHOBOS IS PLOTTING SOMETHING, RIGHT?

PRECISELY, WILL! THE PRINCE IS A CRUEL, POWER-HUNGRY CREATURE. HE WOULD **NEVER** RELINQUISH THE THRONE TO HIS SISTER!

HAPPENS TO THE BEST OF US. I'D NEVER GIVE UP THE FRONT CAR SEAT FOR MY BROTHER.

THEN WHY WOULD HE HOLD A CORONATION?

MY QUESTION EXACTLY! ELYON NEEDS TO OPEN HER EYES...BUT I DON'T KNOW IF SHE'LL SEE THE TRUTH.

134

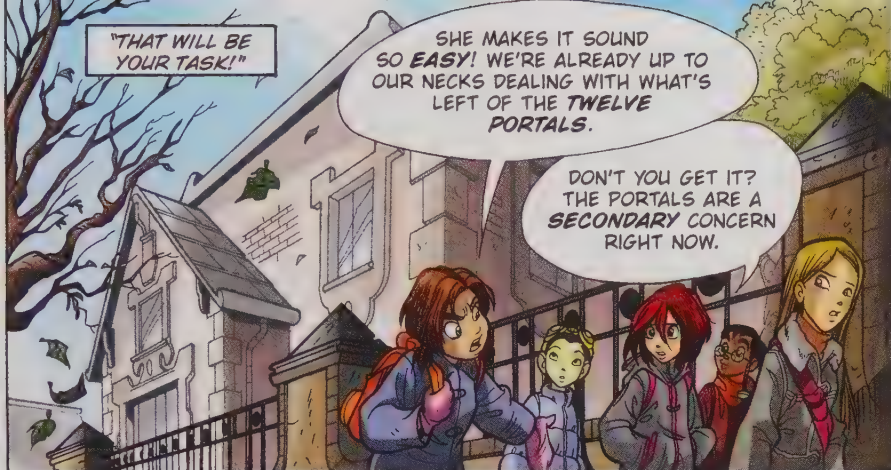
THAT POOR GIRL IS ALL ALONE, UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF **PHOBOS** AND **CEDRIC**...

NOT AS MUCH AS YOU MAY THINK. ELYON'S CHANGING!

MAYBE THAT'S WHAT'S PUSHING THE PRINCE TO DO THIS. ANNOUNCING THE CORONATION WAS HASTY.

BUT THEN... WHAT CAN WE DO?

I'D LIKE YOU TO WATCH OVER ELYON... AND MAKE SURE SHE DOESN'T GET **HURT**!



"THAT WILL BE YOUR TASK!"

SHE MAKES IT SOUND SO *EASY*! WE'RE ALREADY UP TO OUR NECKS DEALING WITH WHAT'S LEFT OF THE *TWELVE PORTALS*.

DON'T YOU GET IT? THE PORTALS ARE A *SECONDARY* CONCERN RIGHT NOW.

IF MERIDIAN COLLAPSES, THE BARRIER WILL FALL TOO. AN UPRISING OR A WAR WOULD DESTROY EVERYTHING!

LET ME GUESS— ANOTHER TRIP TO *MONSTROPOLIS*, HUH?

SURE LOOKS LIKE IT. WELL, IF WE CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET THERE.

THAT'S RIGHT! WITHOUT MY GRANDMA'S MAP, WE'RE IN A PICKLE!

WE COULD ALWAYS USE THE PORTAL IN ELYON'S HOUSE.

WE'D BE SPOTTED FOR SURE. THERE ARE *TWO DETECTIVES* FOLLOWING US. REMEMBER, CORNELIA?

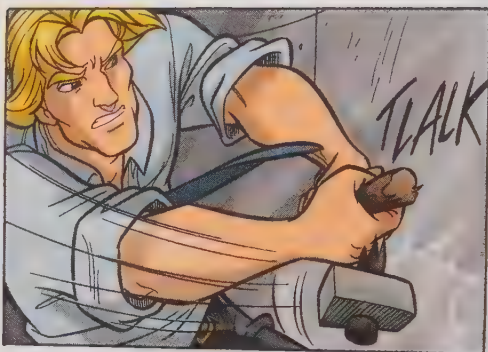
RIGHT! THOSE SNOOPS HAVE PRACTICALLY PITCHED CAMP AT ELLIE'S PLACE.

DO YOU THINK THEY'LL FIND THE *PORTAL*?

NO CHANCE! WITH THE WALL I CREATED, I *GUARANTEE* THEY'LL NEVER FIND IT!

ACTUALLY...

STEP ASIDE,
MEDINA...



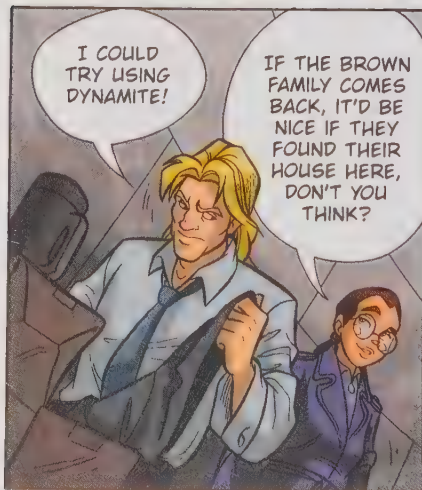
DARN IT!

LET'S GIVE IT
A REST FOR NOW,
McTIENNAN. WHY
DON'T YOU LEAVE
ROUND TWO FOR
TOMORROW
MORNING?



I COULD
TRY USING
DYNAMITE!

IF THE BROWN
FAMILY COMES
BACK, IT'D BE
NICE IF THEY
FOUND THEIR
HOUSE HERE,
DON'T YOU
THINK?



IF THEY EVER CAME
BACK, I'D ASK THEM
TO EXPLAIN WHAT'S
BEHIND *THIS WALL*!

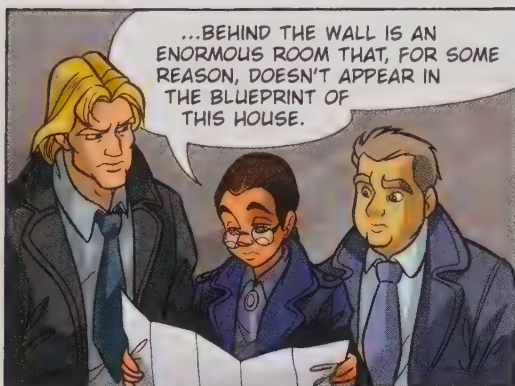
STILL
NOTHING,
DETECTIVES?



UNFORTUNATELY, NOTHING, LAIR. THE ECHO-DETECTOR ONLY CONFIRMED WHAT WE ALREADY KNEW.

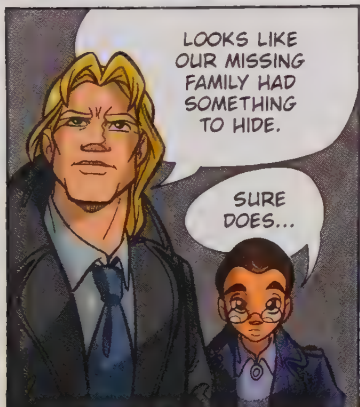


...BEHIND THE WALL IS AN ENORMOUS ROOM THAT, FOR SOME REASON, DOESN'T APPEAR IN THE BLUEPRINT OF THIS HOUSE.

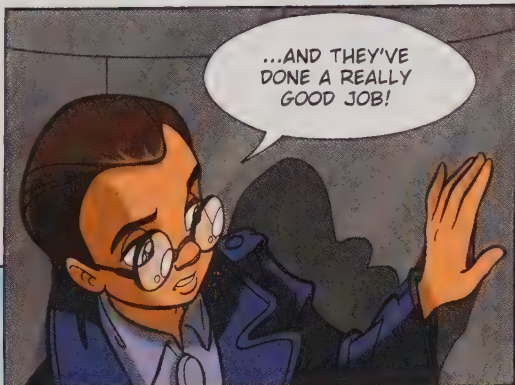


LOOKS LIKE OUR MISSING FAMILY HAD SOMETHING TO HIDE.

SURE DOES...



...AND THEY'VE DONE A REALLY GOOD JOB!

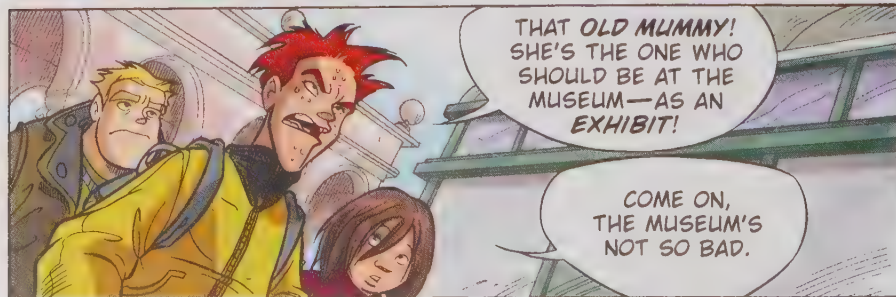
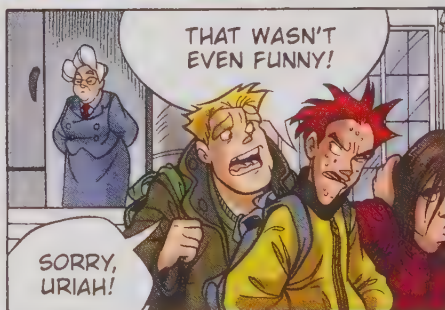
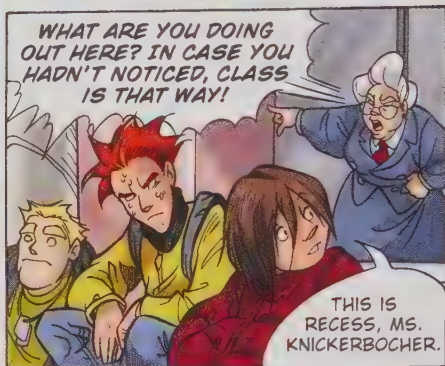
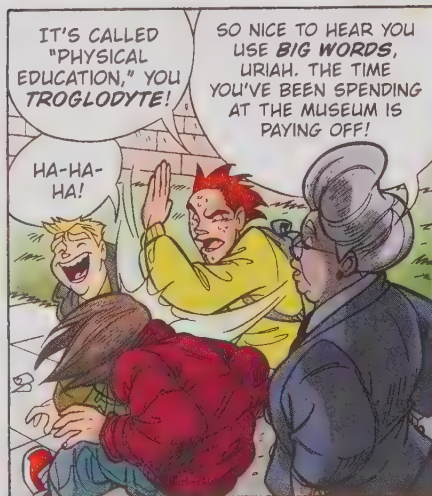
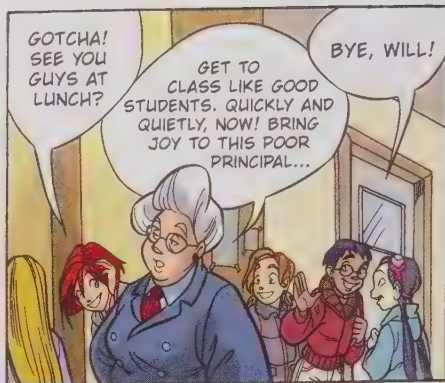
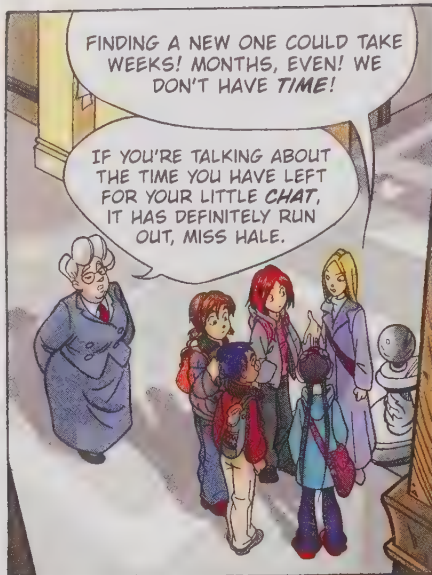


ANOTHER DAY AT SHEFFIELD INSTITUTE...

WE HAVE NO CHOICE, GUYS. WE NEED TO FIND ANOTHER PORTAL.

MY DAD SAYS THOSE TWO COPS ARE GONNA BE AROUND FOR A LONG TIME.





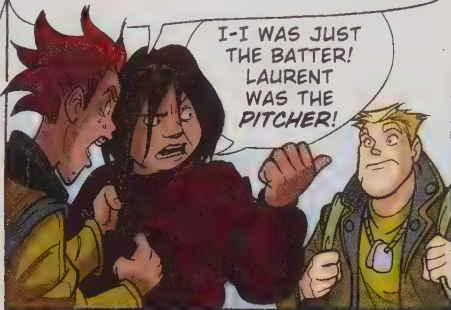
SHUT UP, KURT!
WE WERE SUPPOSED
TO WORK THERE FOR
THREE MONTHS...BUT
BECAUSE OF YOU, WE'LL
BE SPENDING A
WHOLE YEAR IN
THAT PLACE!

**ME? WHY'S
IT ALWAYS MY
FAULT?**

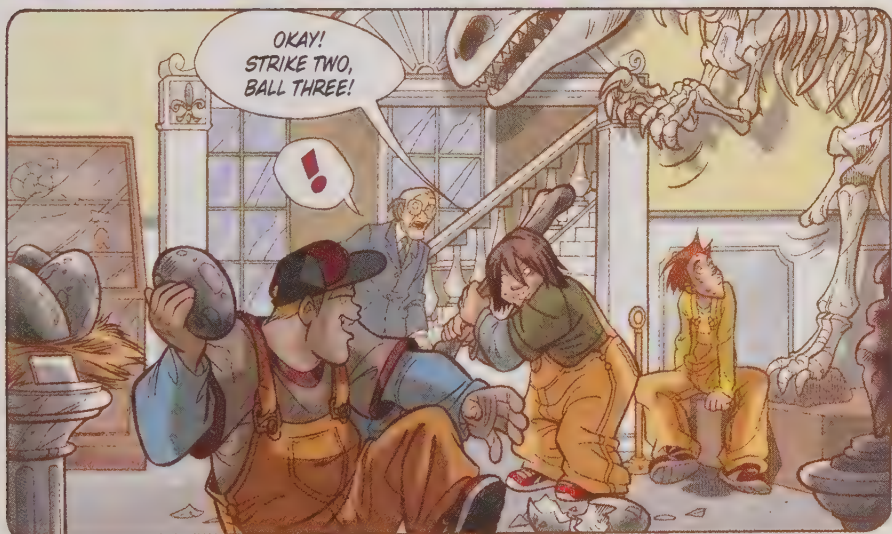


**WHO'S THE ONE WHO STARTED
PLAYING BASEBALL IN THE
DINOSAUR HALL?**

**I-I WAS JUST
THE BATTER!
LAURENT
WAS THE
PITCHER!**



**OKAY!
STRIKE TWO,
BALL THREE!**

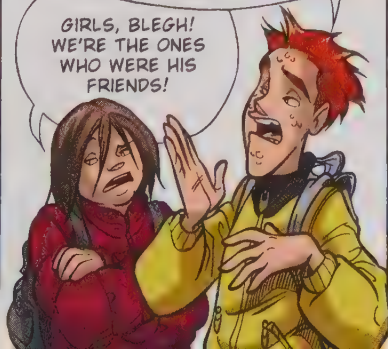


**NIGEL'S THE ONLY
ONE WHO DIDN'T GET
IN TROUBLE.**



**OH YEAH! DID HIS THREE
MONTHS AND GOT OFF CLEAN 'COS
HE'S A GOOD BOY...OUR LITTLE
NIGEL'S CHANGED! NOW HE HANGS
OUT WITH "DECENT FOLK," LIKE
JUDGE COOK'S
DAUGHTER!**

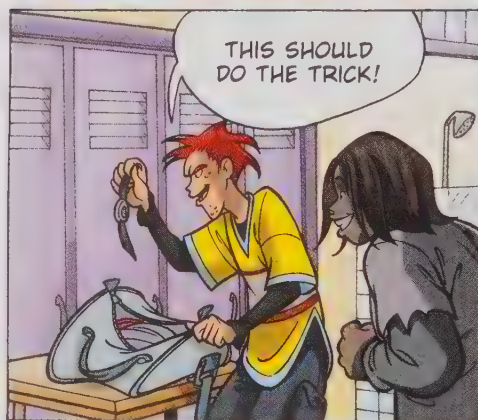
**GIRLS, BLEGH!
WE'RE THE ONES
WHO WERE HIS
FRIENDS!**

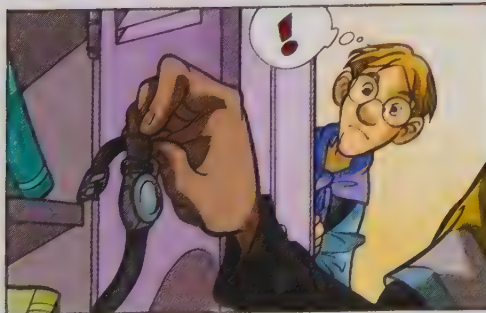
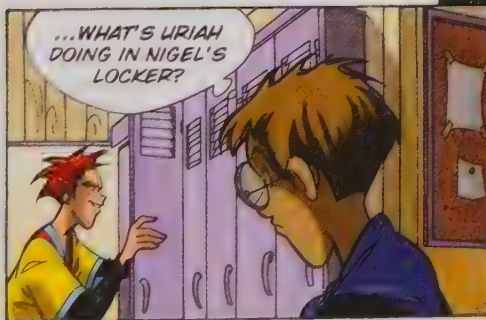


**HOW ABOUT WE GIVE A
FAREWELL GIFT TO OUR
OLD FRIEND?**

**WHADDAYA
SAY TO A NICE
WATCH?**







LATER, IN
THE SCHOOL
CAFETERIA...

I'VE BEEN
THINKING IT OVER
AND MIGHT HAVE
THE **SOLUTION** TO
OUR PROBLEM.

YOU
FOUND A
WAY TO
GET TO
MERIDIAN
?

I THINK SO. THE PORTAL
VATHEK USED TO
GET TO HEATHERFIELD
A FEW DAYS AGO.*

WHEN WE
WENT BACK TO
METAMOOR WITH
HIM, WE USED THE
PORTAL IN
ELYON'S
HOUSE.

*SEE THE
PREVIOUS
CHAPTER!

...WHICH MEANS
THERE'S STILL AN OPEN
PORTAL!

RIGHT!
BUT **WHERE**?

THAT'S THE
THING! I **DON'T**
KNOW...BUT WE
SHOULD BE ABLE
TO FIGURE IT
OUT WITH OUR
POWERS!

WANT TO
MEET UP AT
MY PLACE
AFTER
SCHOOL?

COUNT
ME IN!

OKAY! MAP OR NO MAP,
WE MIGHT STILL—

RING

HUH? THE
BELL'S EARLY.
WE STILL HAVE
TEN MINUTES
LEFT FOR
LUNCH...

TO THE COURT-
YARD, EVERYONE!
KNICKERBOCHER'S
MAKING AN
ANNOUNCE-
MENT.



AN
ANNOUNCEMENT?
I THINK POWER'S
FINALLY GONE TO
HER HEAD.

HMMM...
SOMETHING MUST BE
SERIOUSLY WRONG. I
DON'T LIKE THE LOOK
ON HER FACE!

SOMETHING VERY
SERIOUS HAS
HAPPENED, CHILDREN.

I SHOULD REPORT THIS INCIDENT
TO THE POLICE, *BUT*
I'M NOT GOING TO
DO THAT.

SOMEONE
HAS STOLEN A
WATCH FROM YOUR
CLASSMATE DAVID
BERLIN. NOTHING
LIKE THIS HAS EVER
HAPPENED IN MY
SCHOOL!

I WOULD HOPE THAT THE
RESPONSIBLE PARTY WILL THINK
CAREFULLY ABOUT WHAT HE
OR SHE HAS DONE AND WILL
RETURN THE WATCH TO ITS
OWNER.

NOW I'LL RETURN TO MY
OFFICE, AND YOU WILL GO
STRAIGHT TO YOUR
CLASSES,
BUT KNOW
THIS...



...I WANT THAT
WATCH ON MY DESK
BY **TOMORROW**
MORNING!

I'VE ALWAYS TRUSTED
YOU ALL, AND I WOULD
LIKE TO CONTINUE DOING
SO...BUT THAT WILL BE
UP TO YOU.

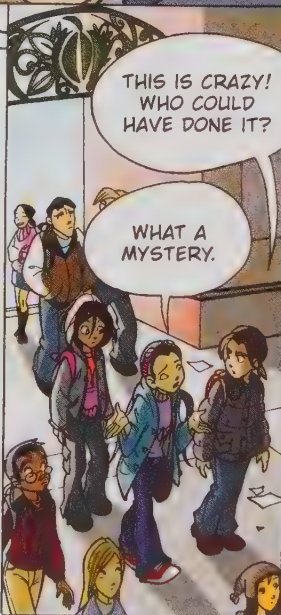
AND REMEMBER,
IF ANYONE KNOWS
SOMETHING...IF ANYONE
HAS SEEN SOMETHING AND
DOESN'T SPEAK UP, THEY
ARE JUST AS
GUILTY!

GULP!



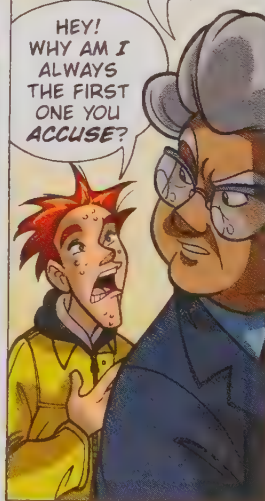
THIS IS CRAZY!
WHO COULD
HAVE DONE IT?

WHAT A
MYSTERY.



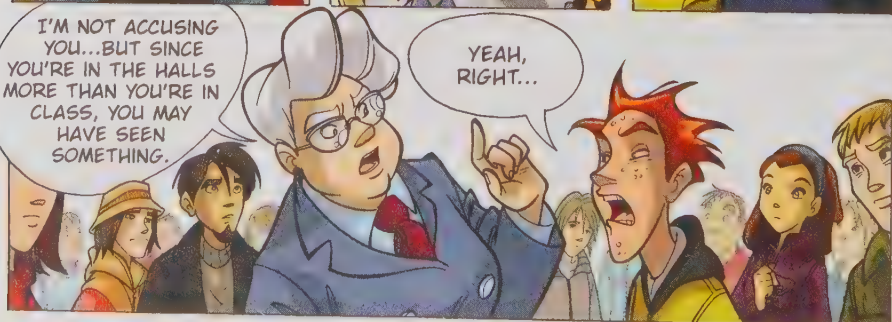
YOU WOULDN'T HAPPEN
TO KNOW ANYTHING
ABOUT IT, WOULD
YOU, **URIAH?**

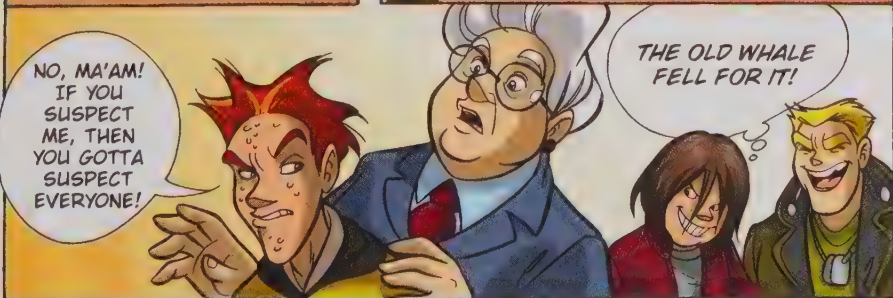
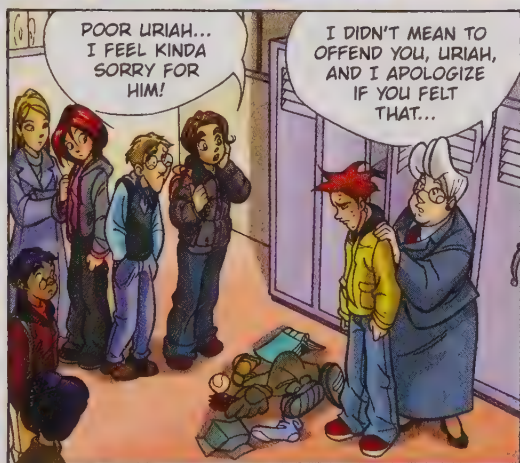
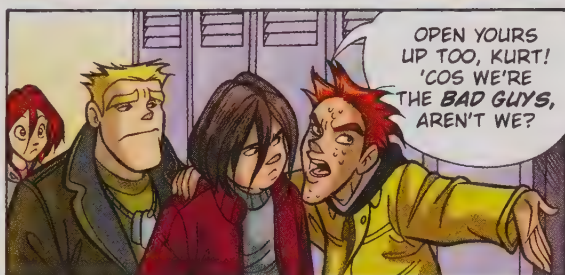
HEY!
WHY AM I
ALWAYS
THE FIRST
ONE YOU
ACCUSE?

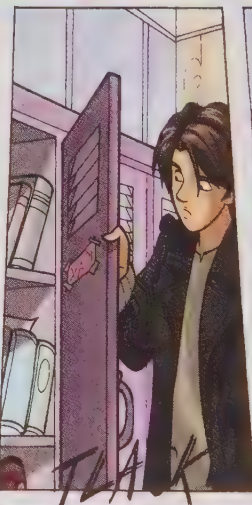
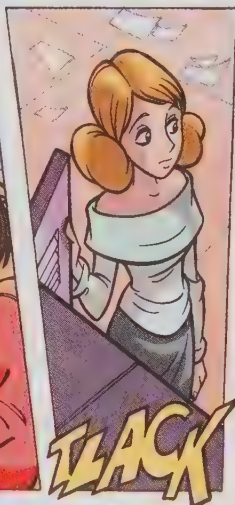
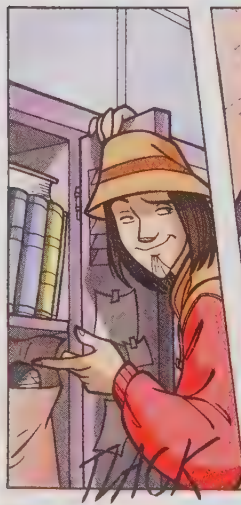
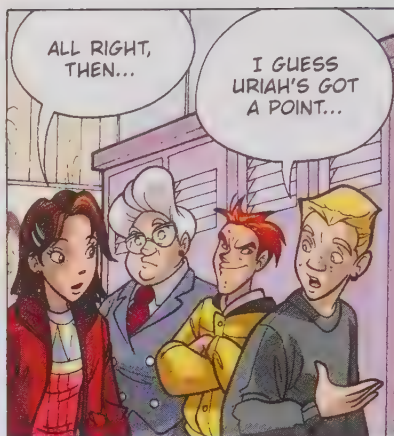


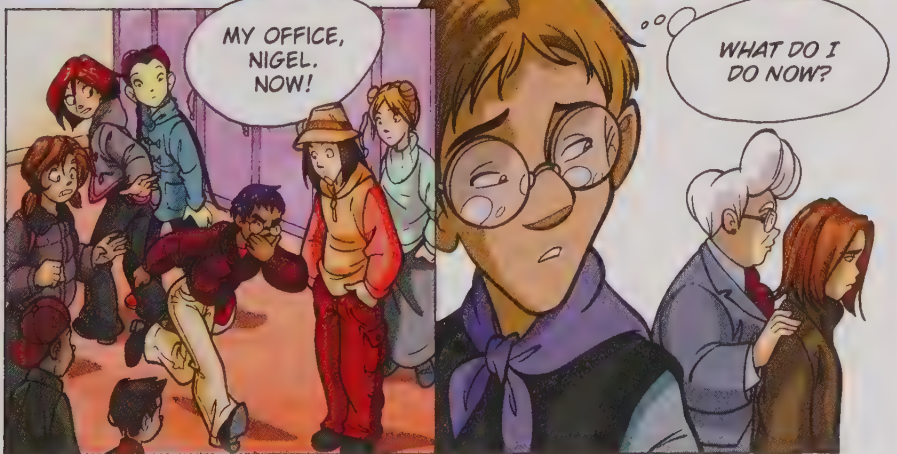
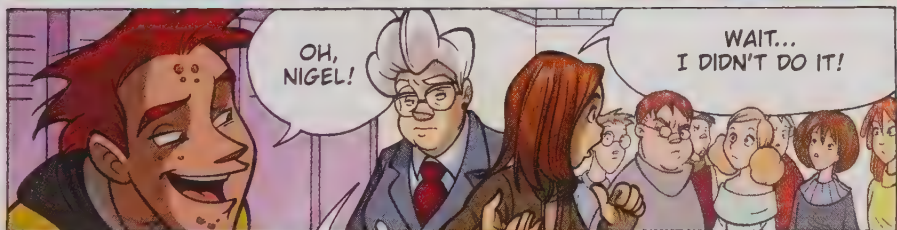
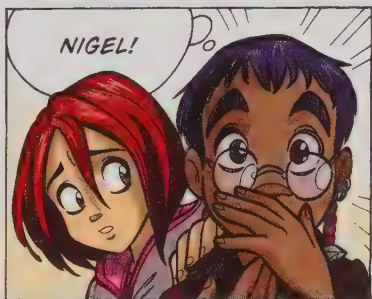
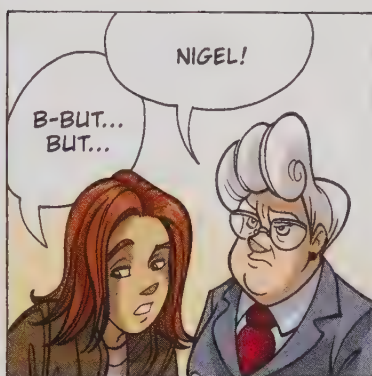
I'M NOT ACCUSING
YOU...BUT SINCE
YOU'RE IN THE HALLS
MORE THAN YOU'RE IN
CLASS, YOU MAY
HAVE SEEN
SOMETHING.

YEAH,
RIGHT...





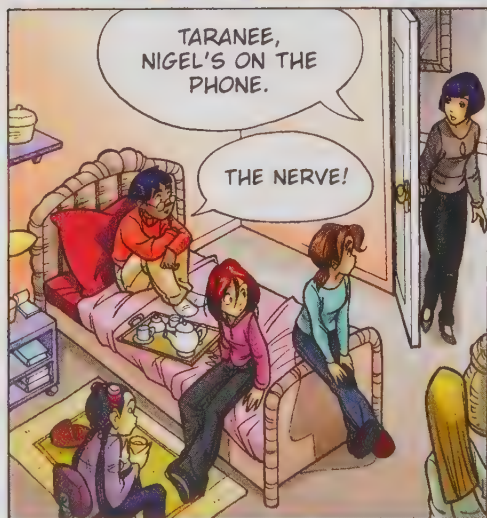




AFTERNOON,
COOK RESIDENCE



YES?
JUST A MOMENT,
PLEASE...



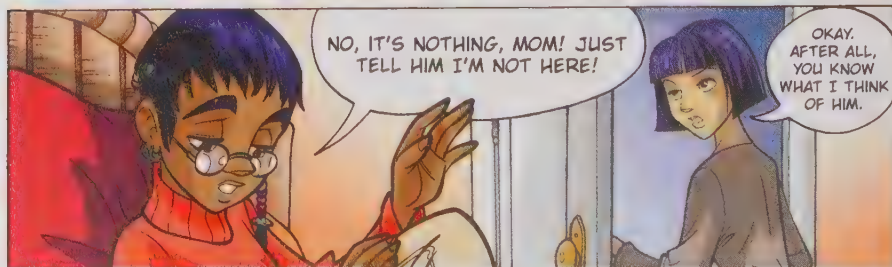
TARANEE,
NIGEL'S ON THE PHONE.

THE NERVE!



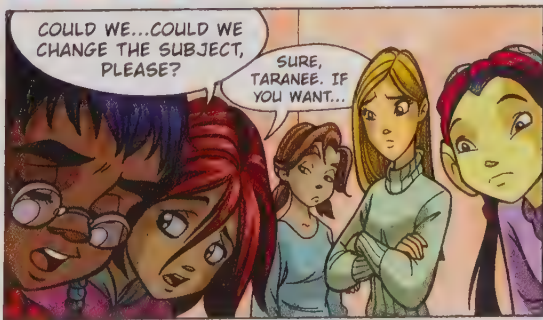
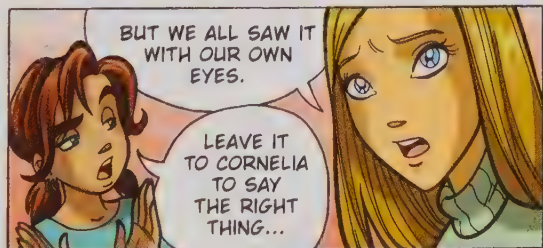
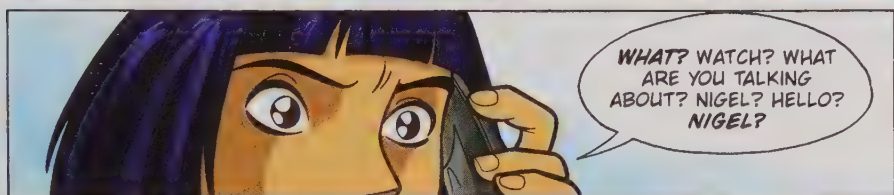
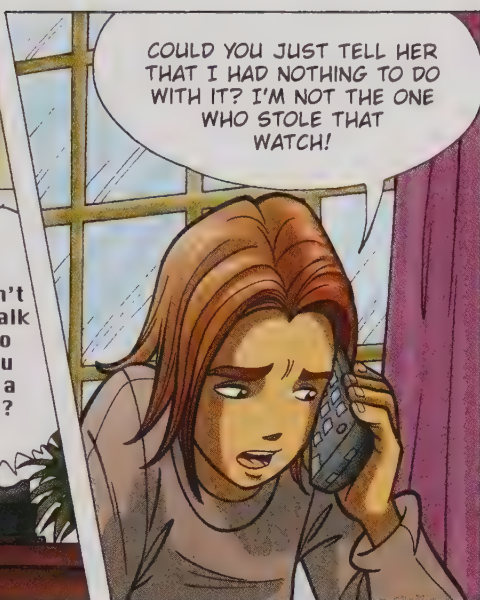
WELL, I
DON'T WANT
TO TALK TO
HIM. TELL
HIM I'M
NOT HERE!

DID SOMETHING
HAPPEN BETWEEN
YOU TWO?



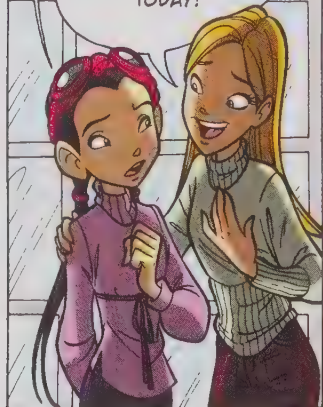
NO, IT'S NOTHING, MOM! JUST
TELL HIM I'M NOT HERE!

OKAY.
AFTER ALL,
YOU KNOW
WHAT I THINK
OF HIM.



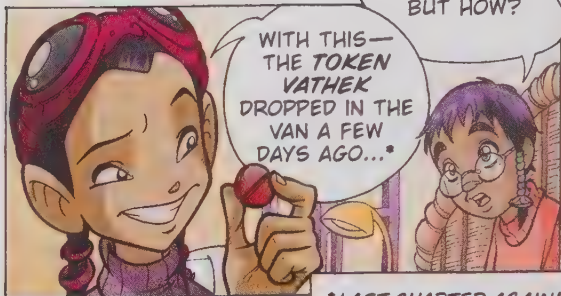
IN THAT CASE, LISTEN!
I THINK I FOUND A WAY
TO LOCATE THE **PORTAL**
VATHEK USED!

THAT'D BE THE
FIRST PIECE OF
GOOD NEWS
TODAY!



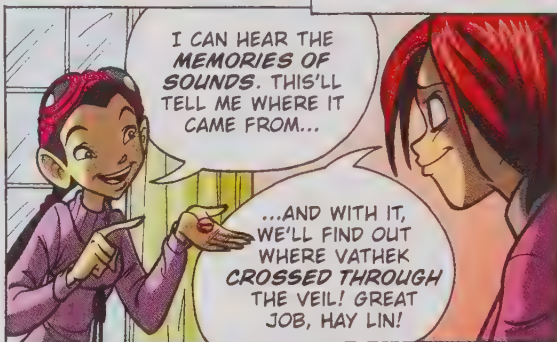
BUT HOW?

WITH THIS—
THE **TOKEN**
VATHEK
DROPPED IN THE
VAN A FEW
DAYS AGO...



*LAST CHAPTER AGAIN!

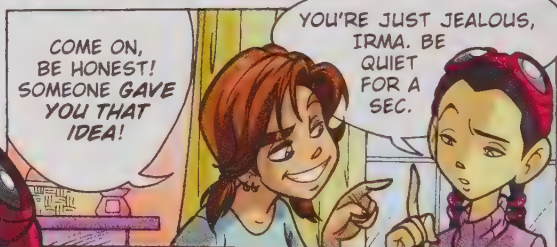
I CAN HEAR THE
MEMORIES OF
SOUNDS. THIS'LL
TELL ME WHERE IT
CAME FROM...



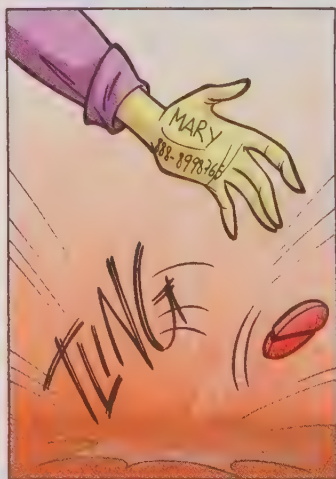
...AND WITH IT,
WE'LL FIND OUT
WHERE VATHEK
CROSSED THROUGH
THE VEIL! GREAT
JOB, HAY LIN!

COME ON,
BE HONEST!
SOMEONE GAVE
YOU THAT
IDEA!

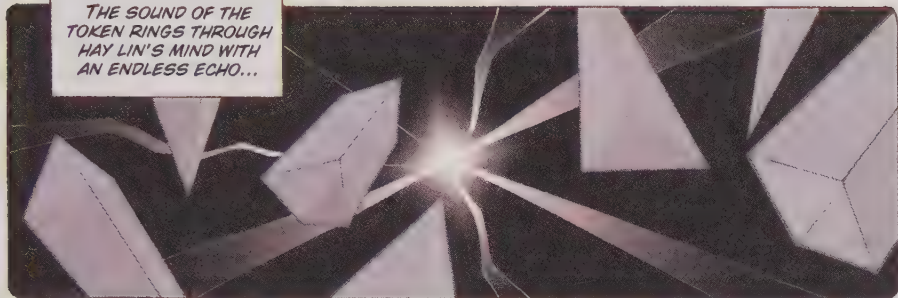
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS,
IRMA. BE
QUIET FOR A
SEC.



I
HAVE TO
FOCUS!



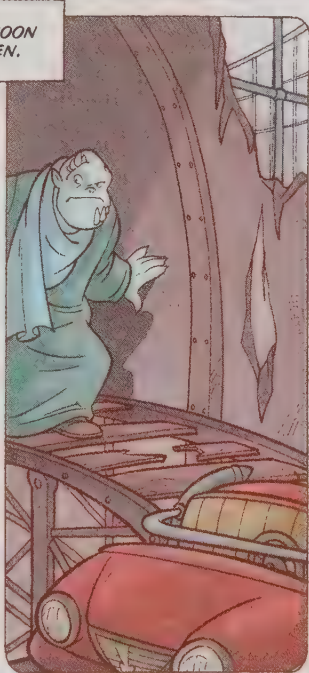
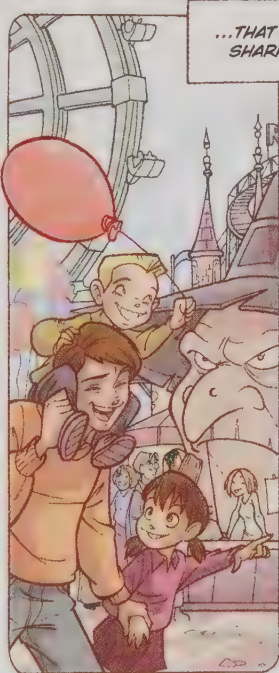
THE SOUND OF THE
TOKEN RINGS THROUGH
HAY LIN'S MIND WITH
AN ENDLESS ECHO...



...AND BEFORE THE
GIRL'S EYES PASS
BLURRED AND JUMBLED
IMAGES...



...THAT SOON
SHARPEN.



OF COURSE.
NOW I GET
IT!



IT'S AN
AMUSEMENT PARK!
THE OLD ABANDONED
CARNIVAL JUST
OUTSIDE OF
HEATHERFIELD.

YOU'RE
SURE?



TOTALLY! THIS WAS A
TOKEN FOR THE
SHOOTING GALLERY.

THAT LEAVES US WITH
ONLY ONE THING TO
DO...

I DON'T
KNOW WHY
VATHEK
PICKED IT UP,
BUT HE DID
US A **SOLID!**

A STRONG WIND
RACES THROUGH THE
AMUSEMENT PARK...

...TO MERIDIAN!

Wooooosh

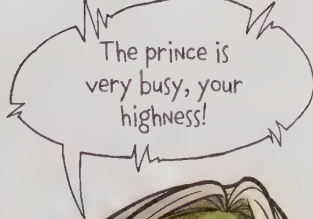
Princess,
you'll catch a cold
out here!

THE WIND
DOESN'T
BOther ME,
MURMURER.

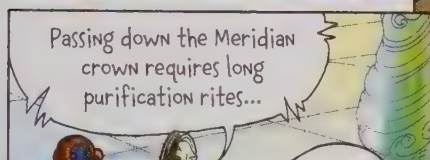


Why not rest? You need it for tomorrow!

RIDICULOUS!
WHERE'S MY BROTHER?
I'VE BEEN WAITING TO TALK TO HIM ALL DAY!

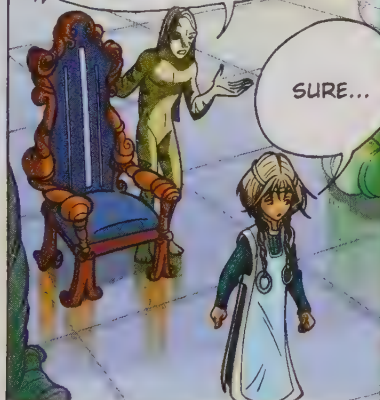


The prince is very busy, your highness!

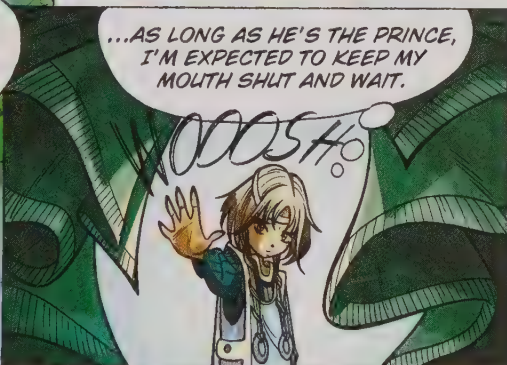


Passing down the Meridian crown requires long purification rites...

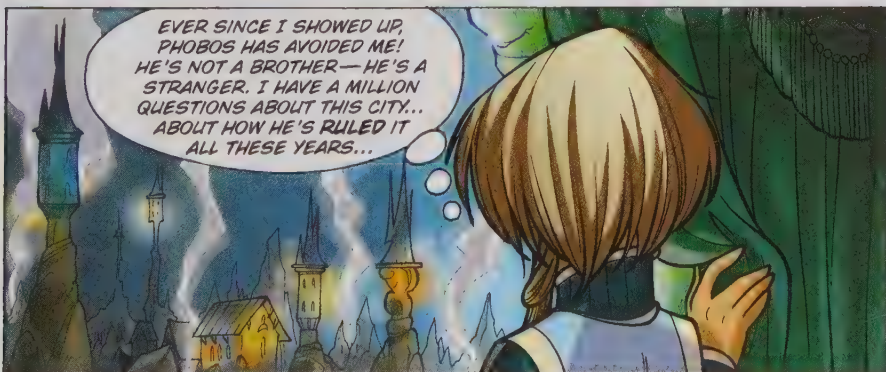
SURE...



...AS LONG AS HE'S THE PRINCE, I'M EXPECTED TO KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT AND WAIT.

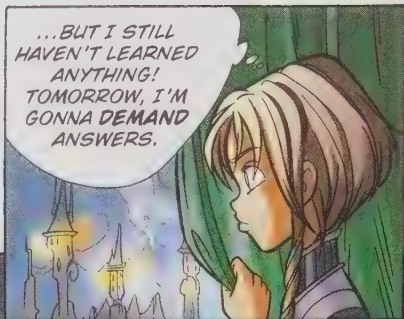


OOOOSH



EVER SINCE I SHOWED UP, PHOBOS HAS AVOIDED ME! HE'S NOT A BROTHER—HE'S A STRANGER. I HAVE A MILLION QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS CITY... ABOUT HOW HE'S RULED IT ALL THESE YEARS...

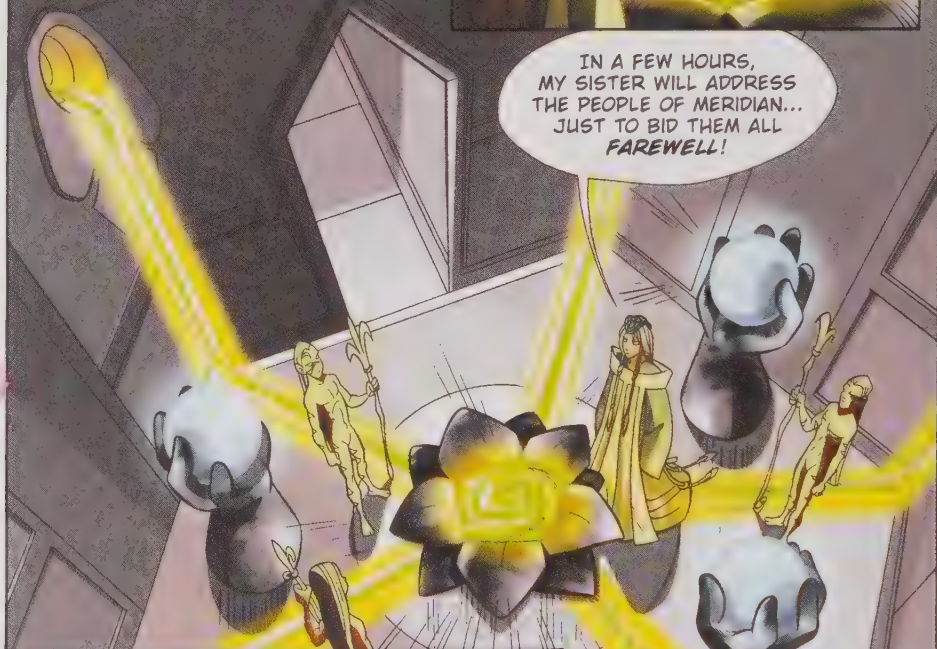
...BUT I STILL
HAVEN'T LEARNED
ANYTHING!
TOMORROW, I'M
GONNA DEMAND
ANSWERS.



YOUNG ELYON IS
NERVOUS... AND SHE
HAS GOOD REASON
TO BE!

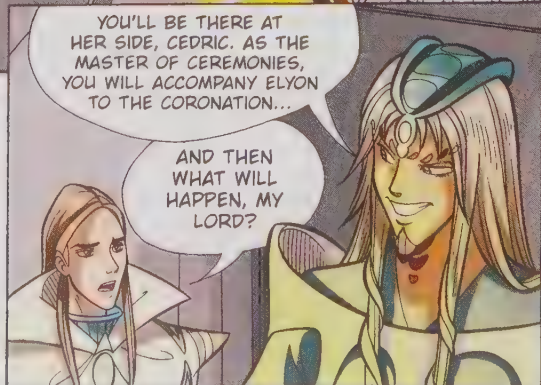


IN A FEW HOURS,
MY SISTER WILL ADDRESS
THE PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN...
JUST TO BID THEM ALL
FAREWELL!



YOU'LL BE THERE AT
HER SIDE, CEDRIC. AS THE
MASTER OF CEREMONIES,
YOU WILL ACCOMPANY ELYON
TO THE CORONATION...

AND THEN
WHAT WILL
HAPPEN, MY
LORD?

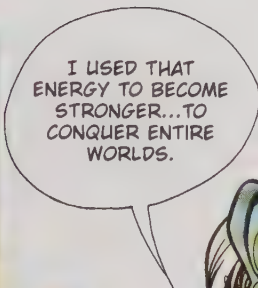


THEN...IT
WILL BE THE
BEGINNING OF
THE END!

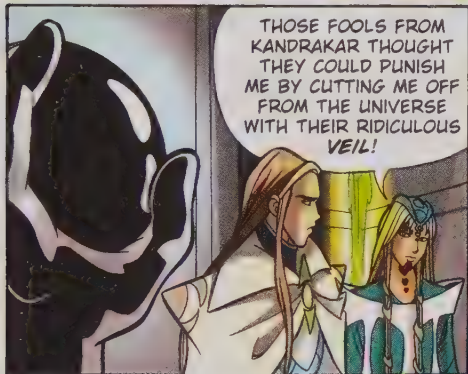




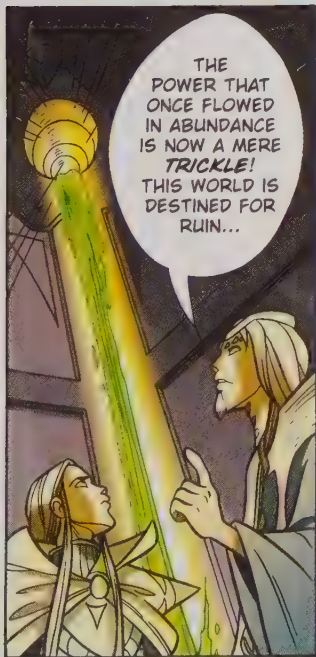
OBSERVE, CEDRIC. A RIVER OF **MAGICAL ENERGY** ONCE FLOWED THROUGH HERE...
MERIDIAN'S PUREST, MOST POWERFUL RESOURCE.



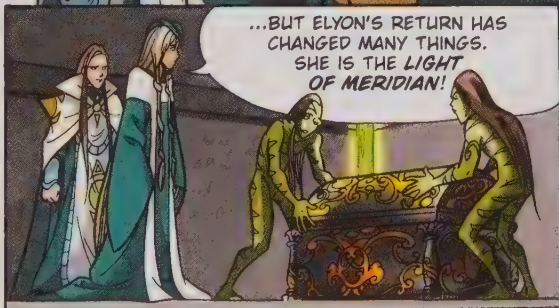
I USED THAT ENERGY TO BECOME STRONGER...TO CONQUER ENTIRE WORLDS.



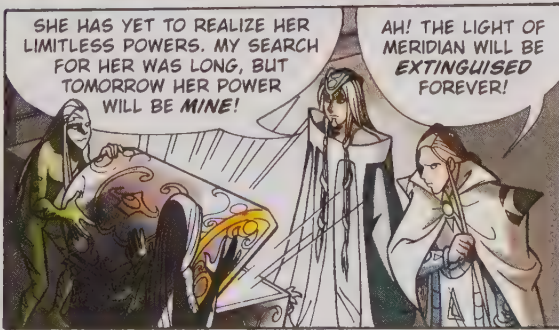
THOSE FOOLS FROM KANDRAKAR THOUGHT THEY COULD PUNISH ME BY CUTTING ME OFF FROM THE UNIVERSE WITH THEIR RIDICULOUS **VEIL!**



THE POWER THAT ONCE FLOWED IN ABUNDANCE IS NOW A MERE **TRICKLE!** THIS WORLD IS DESTINED FOR RUIN...



...BUT ELYON'S RETURN HAS CHANGED MANY THINGS. SHE IS THE **LIGHT OF MERIDIAN!**



SHE HAS YET TO REALIZE HER LIMITLESS POWERS. MY SEARCH FOR HER WAS LONG, BUT TOMORROW HER POWER WILL BE **MINE!**

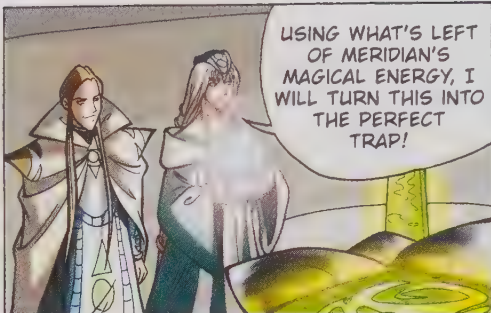
AH! THE LIGHT OF MERIDIAN WILL BE **EXTINGUISHED FOREVER!**

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE HER POWERS, MY LORD?

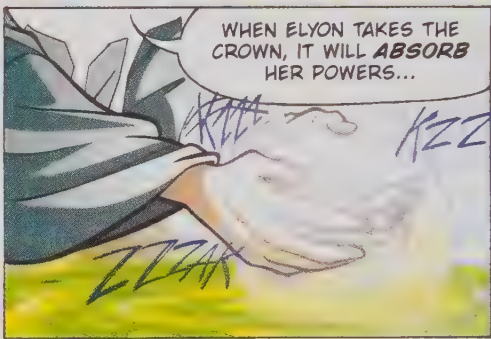
WITH THIS, CEDRIC! THE CROWN OF LIGHT!



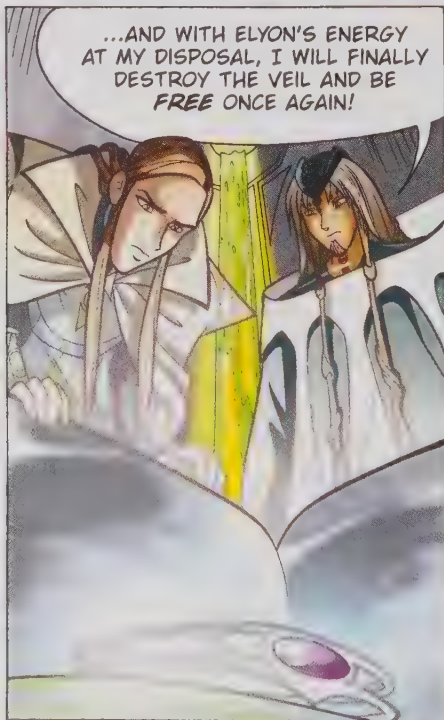
USING WHAT'S LEFT OF MERIDIAN'S MAGICAL ENERGY, I WILL TURN THIS INTO THE PERFECT TRAP!



WHEN ELYON TAKES THE CROWN, IT WILL **ABSORB** HER POWERS...

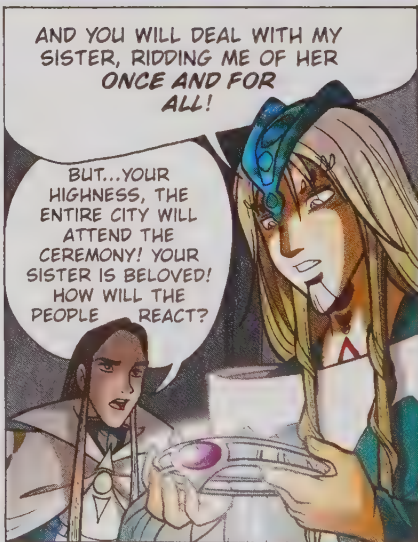


...AND WITH ELYON'S ENERGY AT MY DISPOSAL, I WILL FINALLY DESTROY THE VEIL AND BE **FREE** ONCE AGAIN!



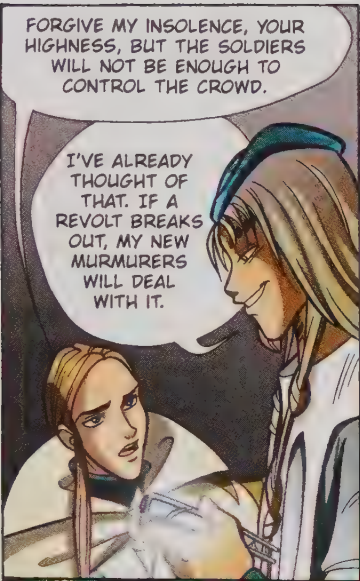
AND YOU WILL DEAL WITH MY SISTER, RIDDING ME OF HER **ONCE AND FOR ALL!**

BUT...YOUR HIGHNESS, THE ENTIRE CITY WILL ATTEND THE CEREMONY! YOUR SISTER IS BELOVED! HOW WILL THE PEOPLE REACT?



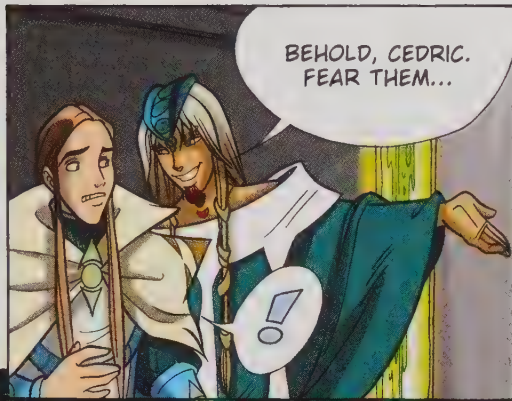
THAT IS NOT OUR CONCERN!





FORGIVE MY INSOLENCE, YOUR HIGHNESS, BUT THE SOLDIERS WILL NOT BE ENOUGH TO CONTROL THE CROWD.

I'VE ALREADY THOUGHT OF THAT. IF A REVOLT BREAKS OUT, MY NEW MURMURERS WILL DEAL WITH IT.



BEHOLD, CEDRIC. FEAR THEM...



FEAR THE ANNIHILATORS!

USING THEIR
MAGIC, WILL
AND HER
FRIENDS
HAVE LOCATED
ANOTHER
PORTAL TO
MERIDIAN.

ALL THAT SEPARATES THEM
FROM THEIR MISSION IS AN OLD,
FRAIL FENCE...

SO, SHOULD WE
GET GOING?

BUT THE MISSION
CANNOT BEGIN YET!

OOOPS!

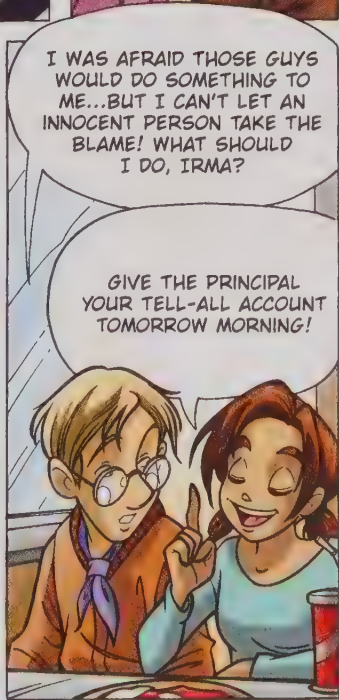
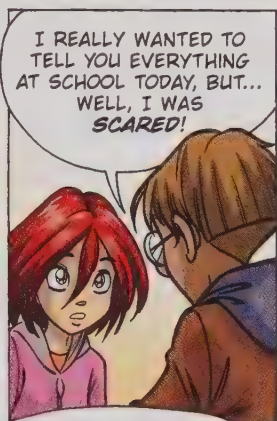
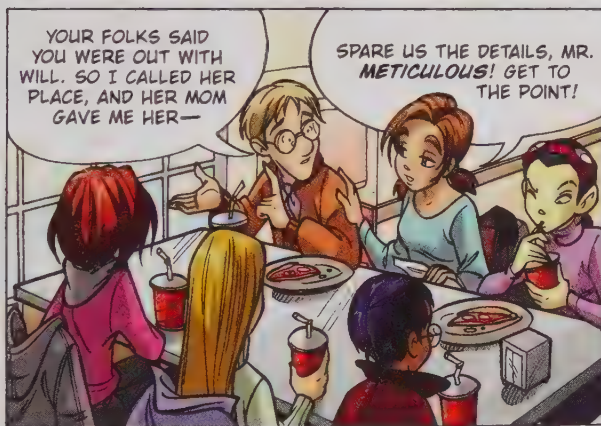
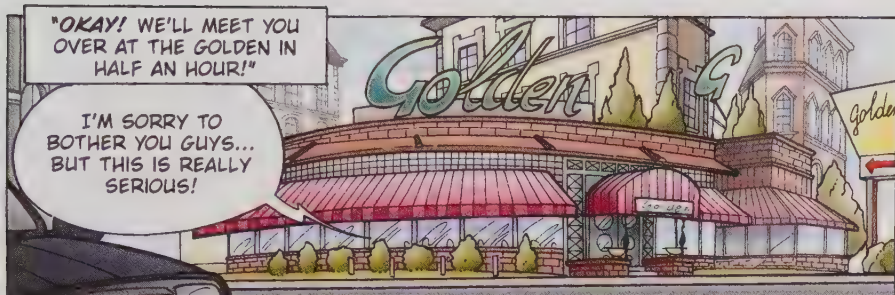
IT'S FOR YOU, IRMA.
IT'S MARTIN.

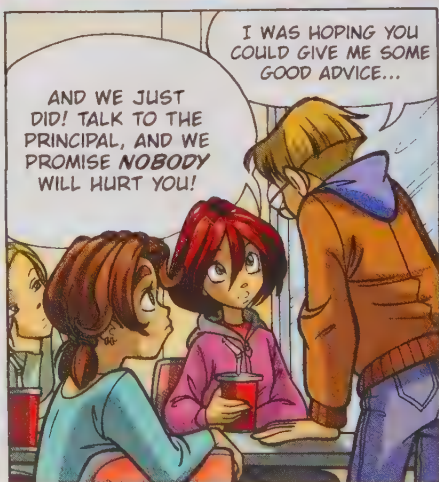
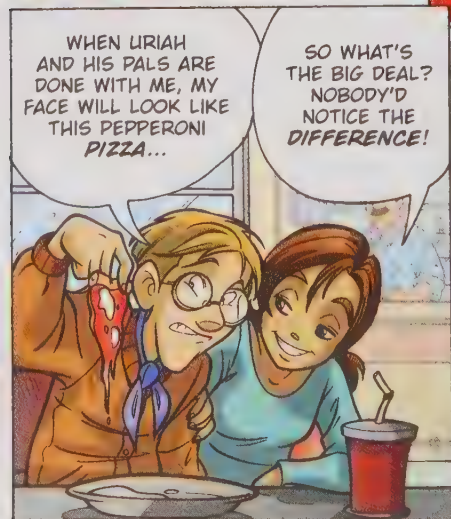
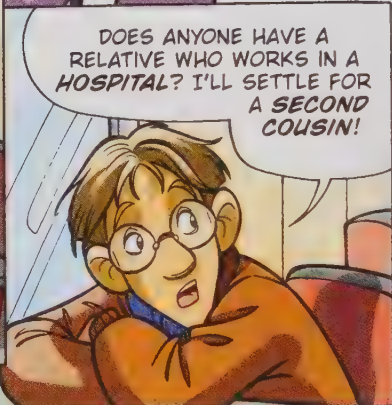
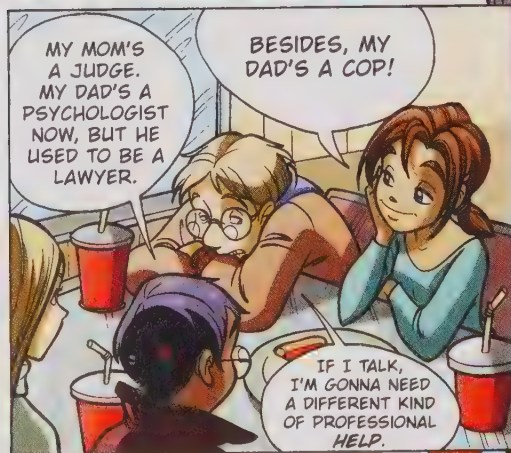
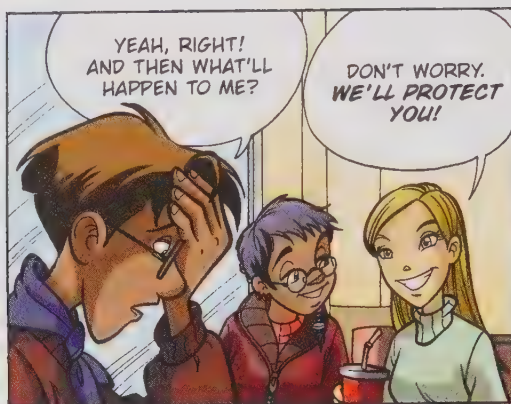
YOU'RE
KIDDING,
RIGHT?

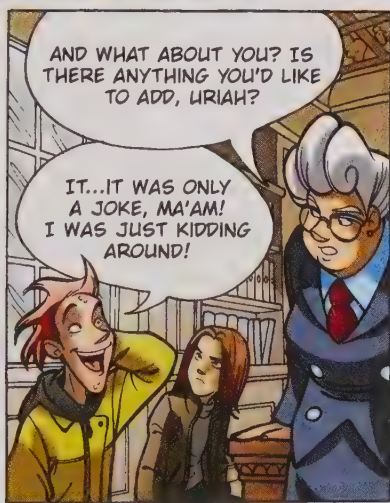
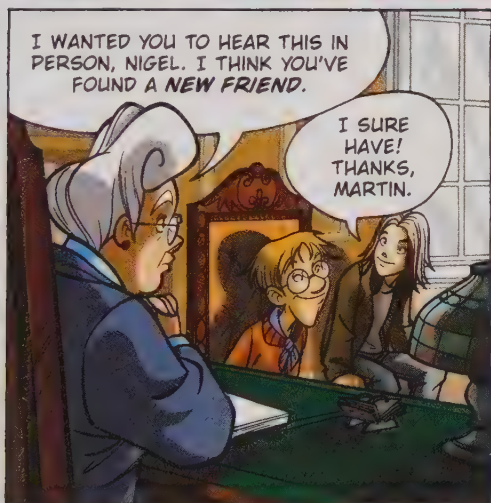
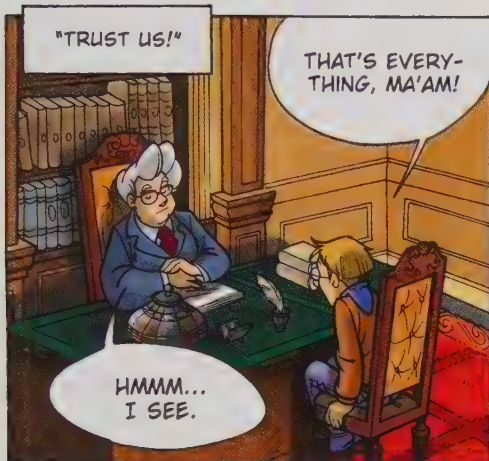
HELLO?
THIS IS WILL...
YEAH, SHE'S
RIGHT HERE.
I'LL PUT
HER ON.

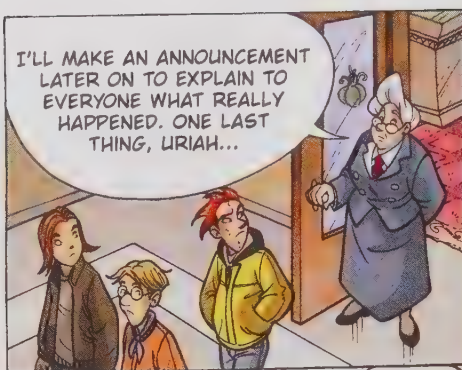
WHAT DO
YOU WANT,
MARTIN? I'M
REALLY BUSY
AND...

WHAT?
ARE YOU
SERIOUS







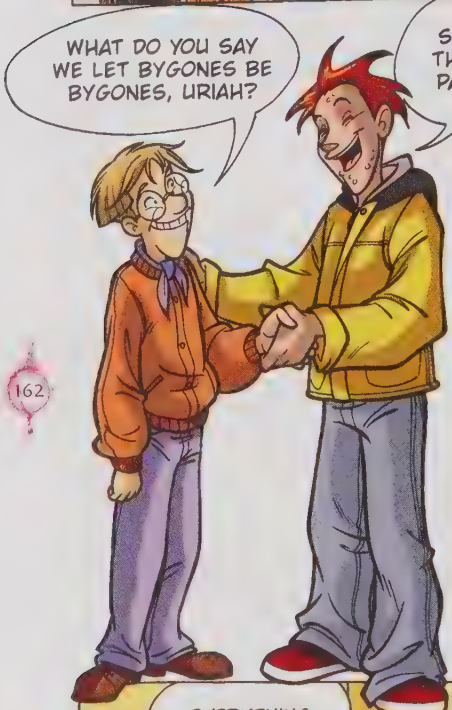


I'LL MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT LATER ON TO EXPLAIN TO EVERYONE WHAT REALLY HAPPENED. ONE LAST THING, URIAH...



...THIS WHOLE THING ENDS RIGHT HERE. IF **ANYTHING** SHOULD HAPPEN TO MARTIN...AND YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN...I WILL BE **EXTREMELY** ANGRY.

NO PROBLEM, MA'AM! I PROMISE!



WHAT DO YOU SAY WE LET BYGONES BE BYGONES, URIAH?

SURE THING, PAL...



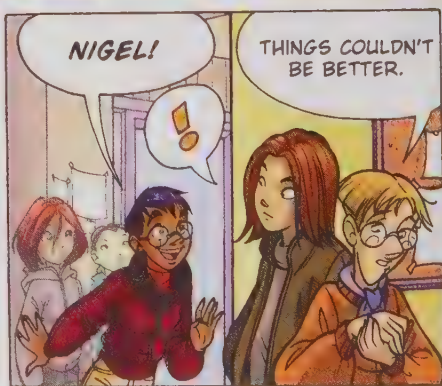
...So get ready to say bye-bye, 'cos you're definitely a goner! See you outside after school, snitch!

EEP!



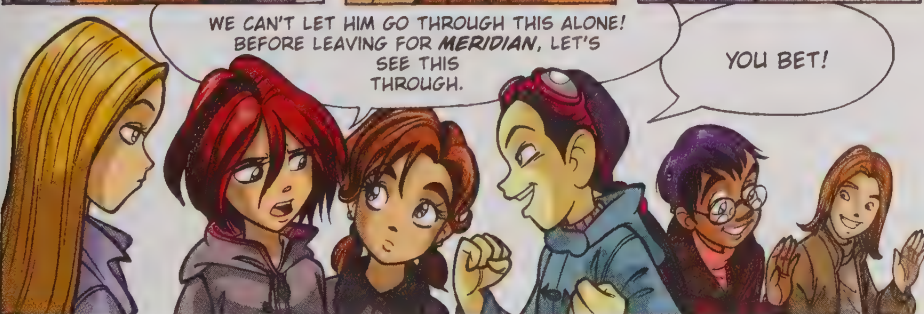
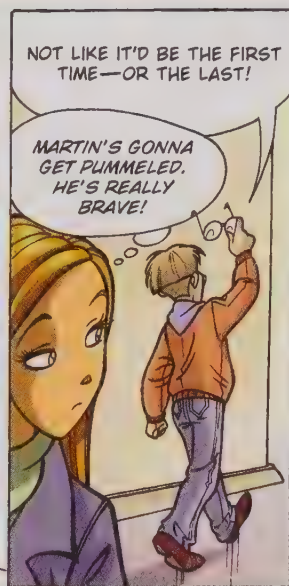
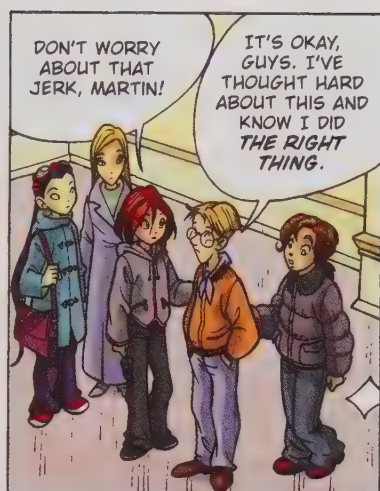
EVERYTHING OKAY, MARTIN?

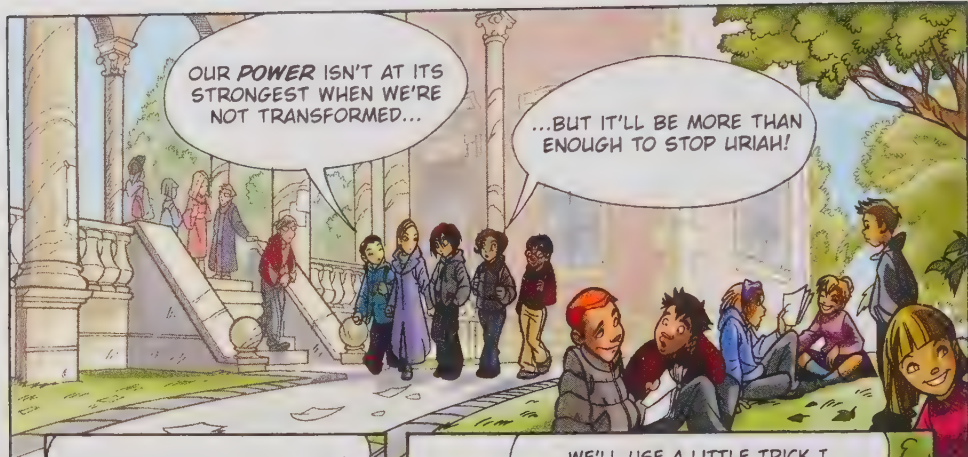
OH, S-SURE...



NIGEL!

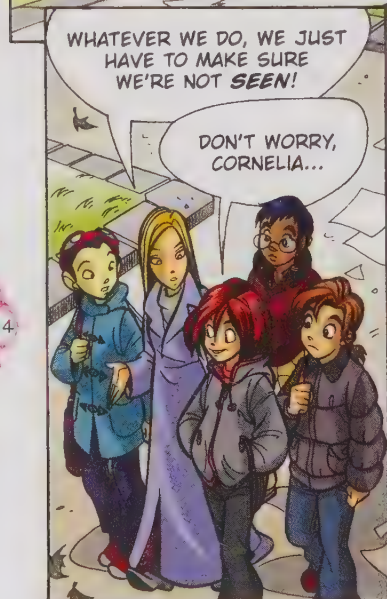
THINGS COULDN'T BE BETTER.





OUR **POWER** ISN'T AT ITS STRONGEST WHEN WE'RE NOT TRANSFORMED...

...BUT IT'LL BE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO STOP URIAH!

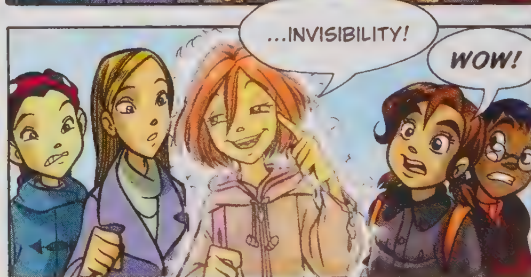


WHATEVER WE DO, WE JUST HAVE TO MAKE SURE WE'RE NOT **SEEN**!

DON'T WORRY, CORNELIA...

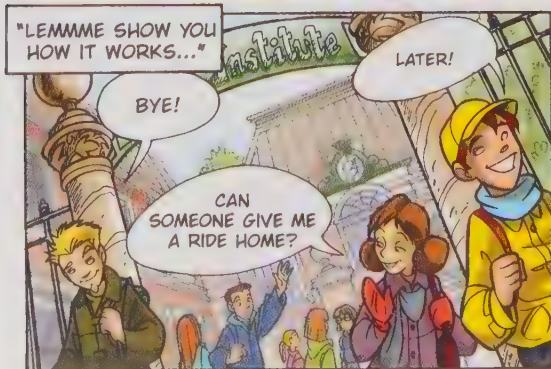


WE'LL USE A LITTLE TRICK I DISCOVERED NOT TOO LONG AGO! A LITTLE SOMETHING CALLED...



...INVISIBILITY!

WOW!

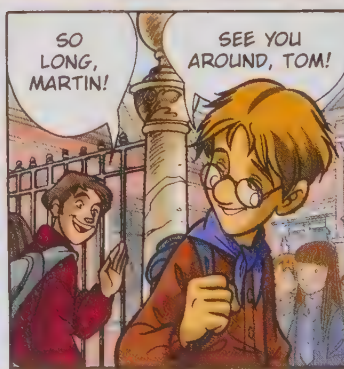


"LEMMME SHOW YOU HOW IT WORKS..."

BYE!

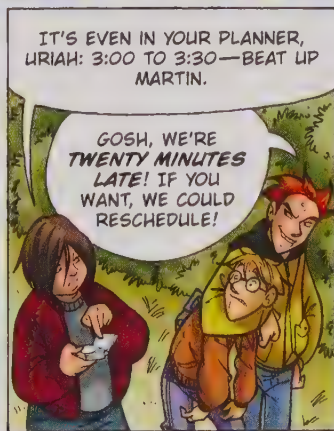
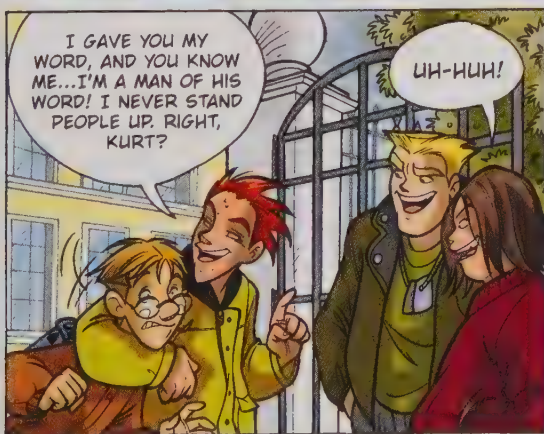
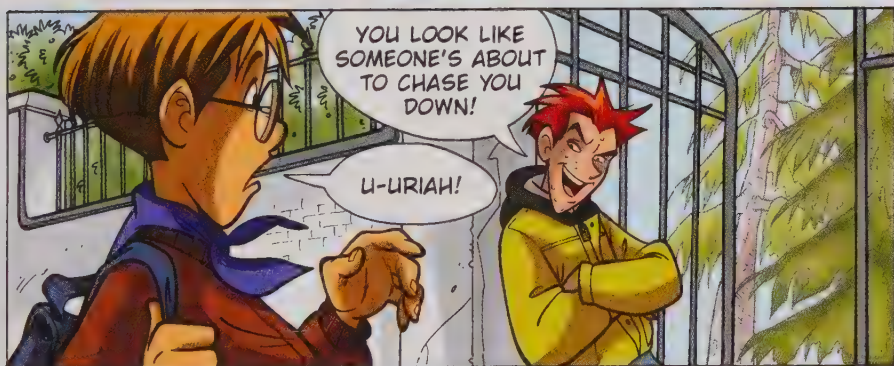
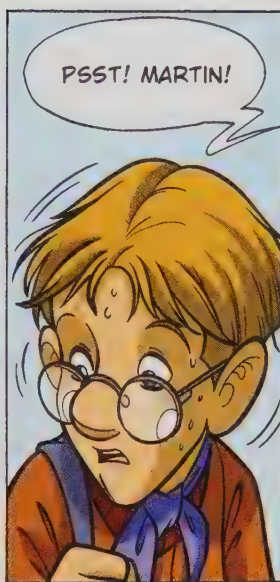
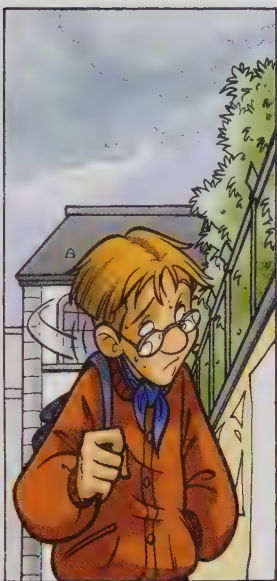
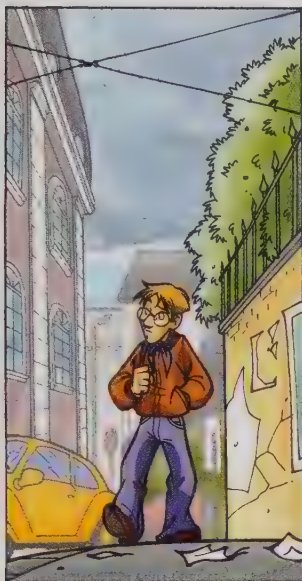
CAN SOMEONE GIVE ME A RIDE HOME?

LATER!



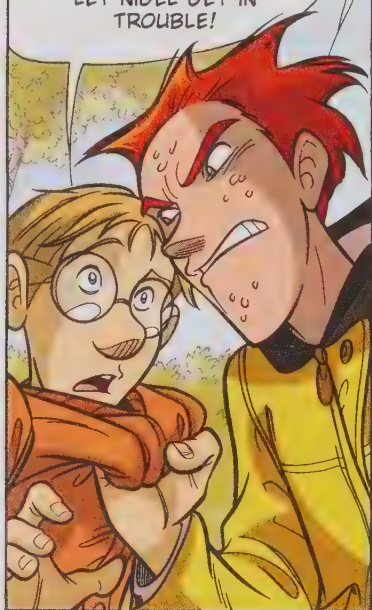
SO LONG, MARTIN!

SEE YOU AROUND, TOM!



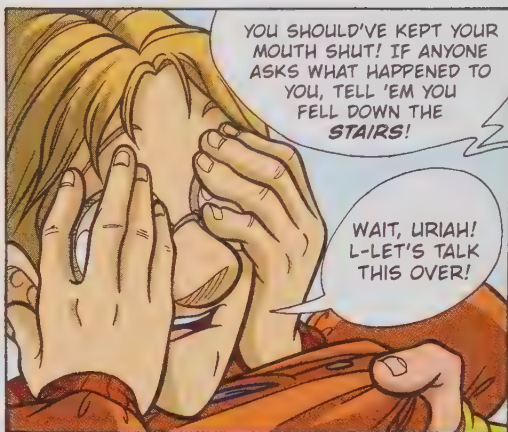
HOW ABOUT FRIDAY AT
THREE AGAIN? NOW THAT I'M
SUSPENDED, I HAVE LOADS
OF *SPARE TIME!*

IT'S NOT MY FAULT!
I COULDN'T PRETEND LIKE
NOTHING HAPPENED AND
LET NIGEL GET IN
TROUBLE!

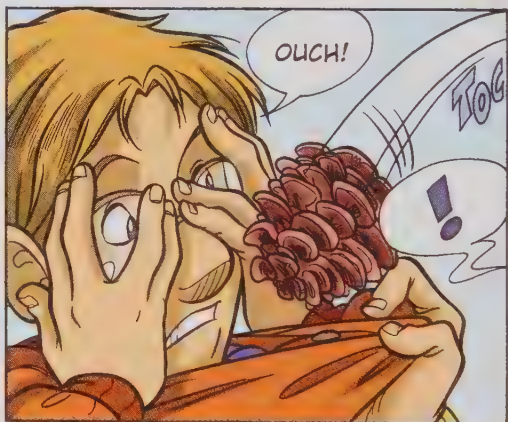


YOU SHOULD'VE KEPT YOUR
MOUTH SHUT! IF ANYONE
ASKS WHAT HAPPENED TO
YOU, TELL 'EM YOU
FELL DOWN THE
STAIRS!

WAIT, URIAH!
L-LET'S TALK
THIS OVER!



OUCH!

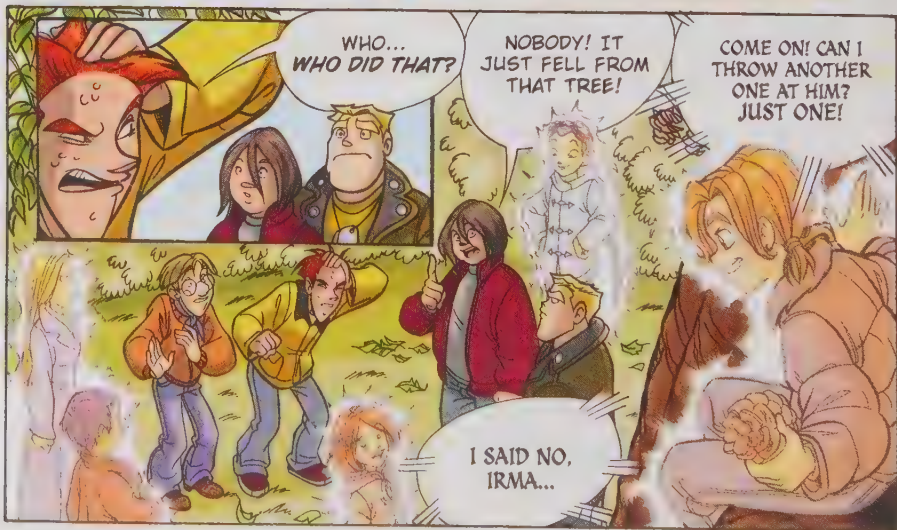


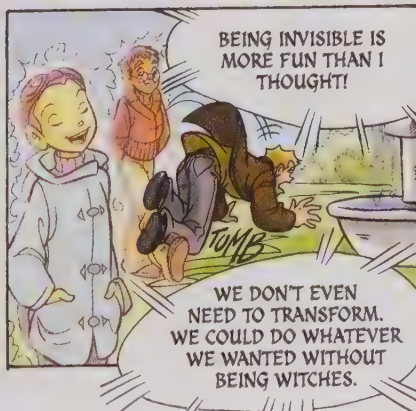
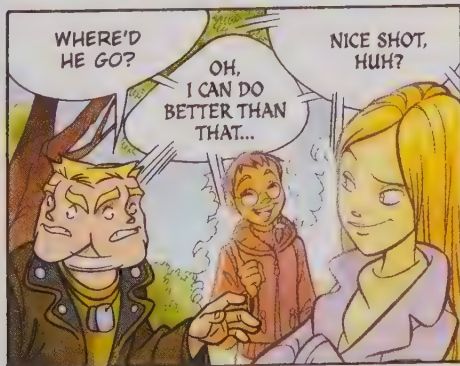
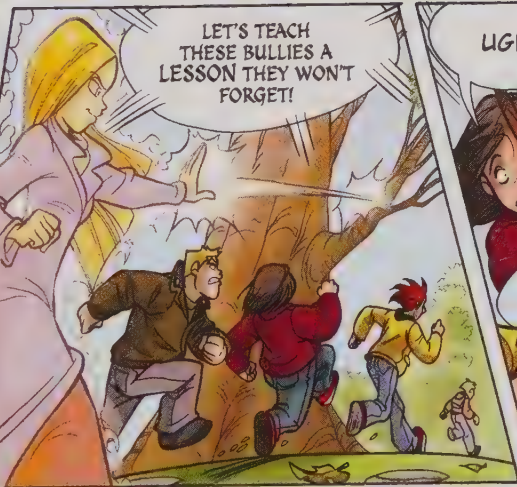
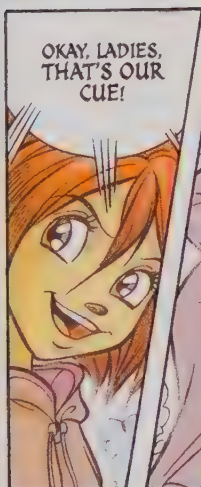
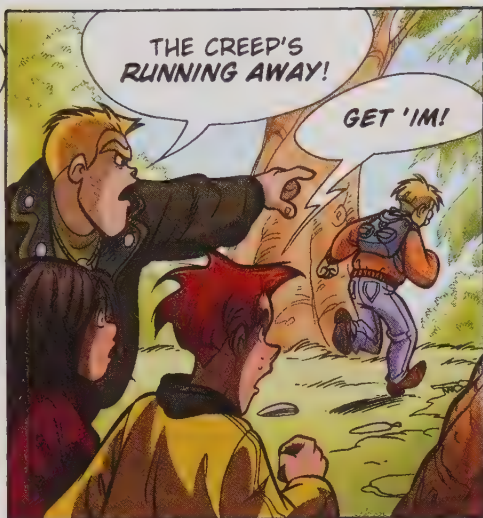
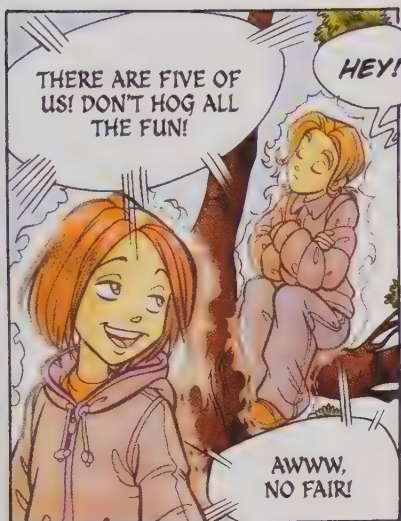
WHO...
WHO DID THAT?

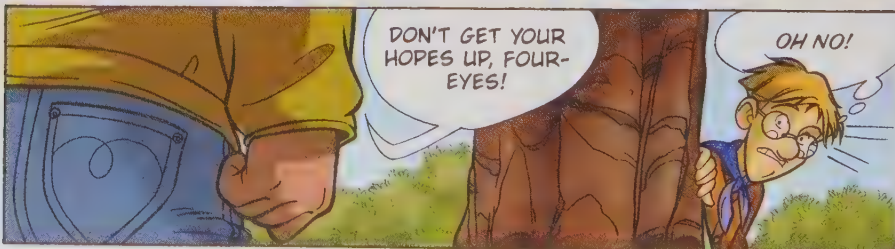
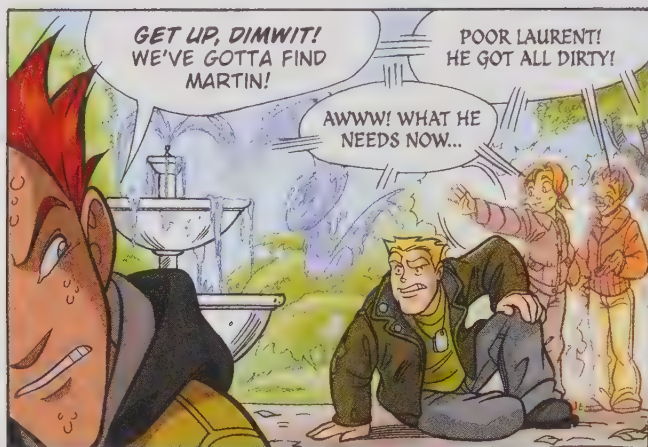
NOBODY! IT
JUST FELL FROM
THAT TREE!

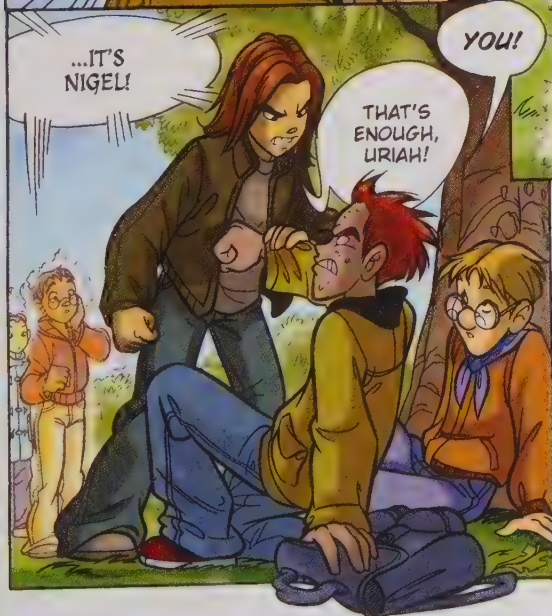
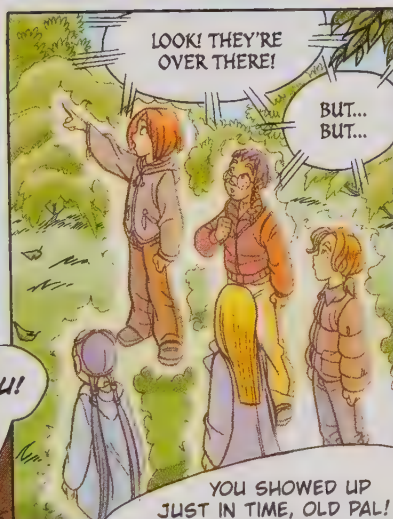
COME ON! CAN I
THROW ANOTHER
ONE AT HIM?
JUST ONE!

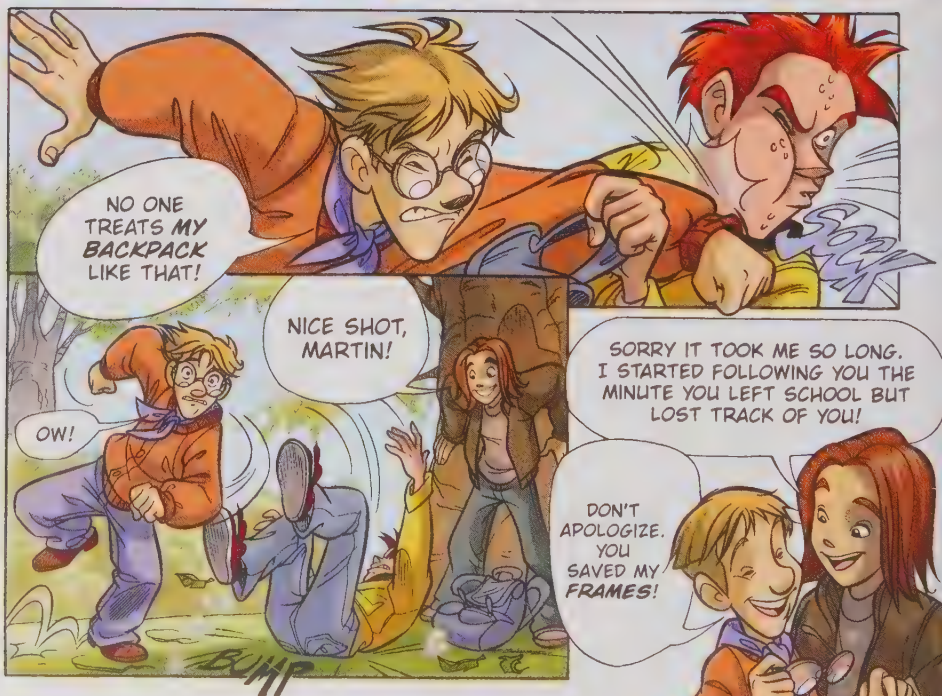
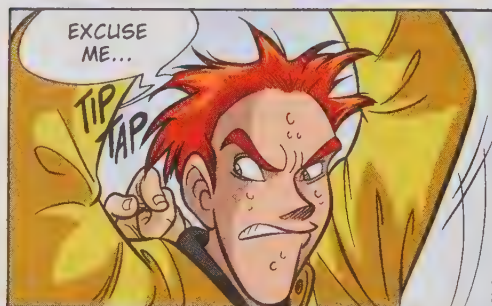
I SAID NO,
IRMA...







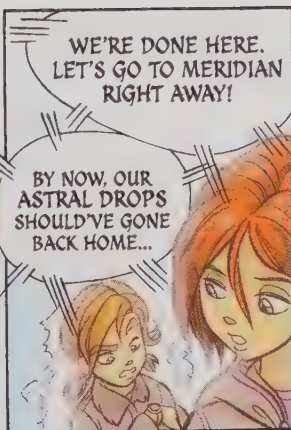






AH...NIGEL IS SUCH A GREAT GUY!

SO THAT'S OVER NOW. LET'S GET BACK TO BUSINESS.



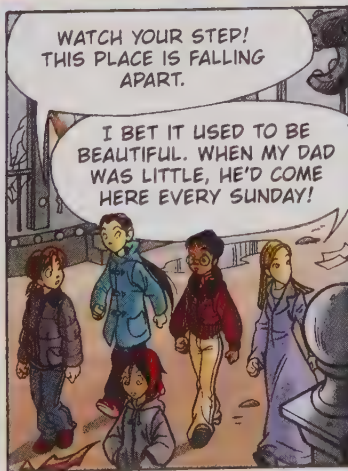
WE'RE DONE HERE. LET'S GO TO MERIDIAN RIGHT AWAY!

BY NOW, OUR ASTRAL DROPS SHOULD'VE GONE BACK HOME...

"...I JUST HOPE THEY DON'T CAUSE AS MUCH TROUBLE AS THEY DID LAST TIME!"



"WE CAN'T WORRY ABOUT THEM RIGHT NOW. THE AMUSEMENT PARK'S WAITING."



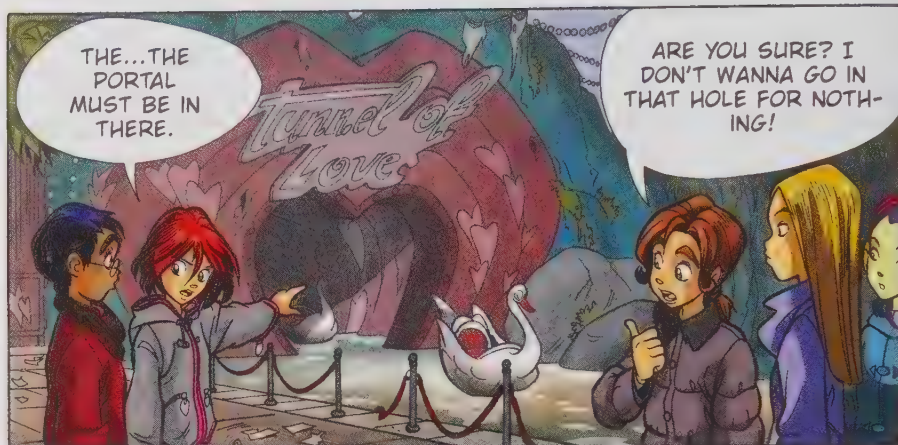
WATCH YOUR STEP! THIS PLACE IS FALLING APART.

I BET IT USED TO BE BEAUTIFUL. WHEN MY DAD WAS LITTLE, HE'D COME HERE EVERY SUNDAY!



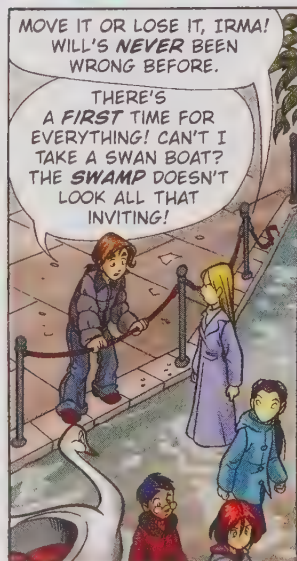
HANG ON! I FEEL SOMETHING!

HERE WE GO. WILL'S SIXTH SENSE IS KICKING IN.



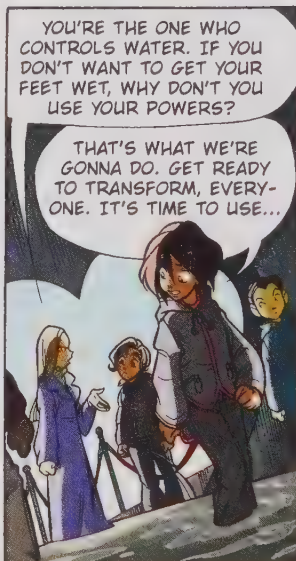
THE...THE
PORTAL
MUST BE IN
THERE.

ARE YOU SURE? I
DON'T WANNA GO IN
THAT HOLE FOR NOTH-
ING!



MOVE IT OR LOSE IT, IRMA!
WILL'S **NEVER** BEEN
WRONG BEFORE.

THERE'S
A **FIRST** TIME FOR
EVERYTHING! CAN'T I
TAKE A SWAN BOAT?
THE **SWAMP** DOESN'T
LOOK ALL THAT
INVITING!

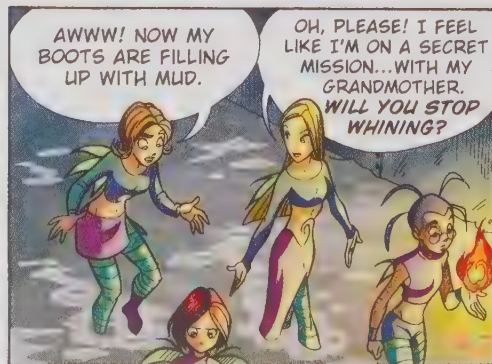


YOU'RE THE ONE WHO
CONTROLS WATER. IF YOU
DON'T WANT TO GET YOUR
FEET WET, WHY DON'T YOU
USE YOUR POWERS?

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE
GONNA DO. GET READY
TO TRANSFORM, EVERY-
ONE. IT'S TIME TO USE...

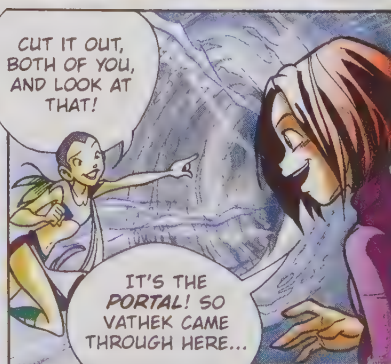


...THE
**HEART OF
KANDRAKAR!**



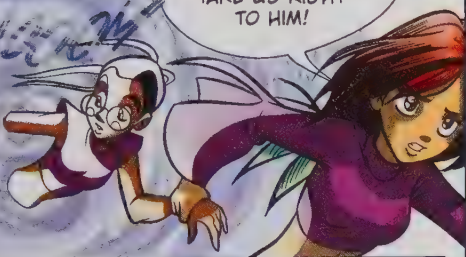
AWWW! NOW MY
BOOTS ARE FILLING
UP WITH MUD.

OH, PLEASE! I FEEL
LIKE I'M ON A SECRET
MISSION...WITH MY
GRANDMOTHER.
**WILL YOU STOP
WHINING?**



CUT IT OUT,
BOTH OF YOU,
AND LOOK AT
THAT!

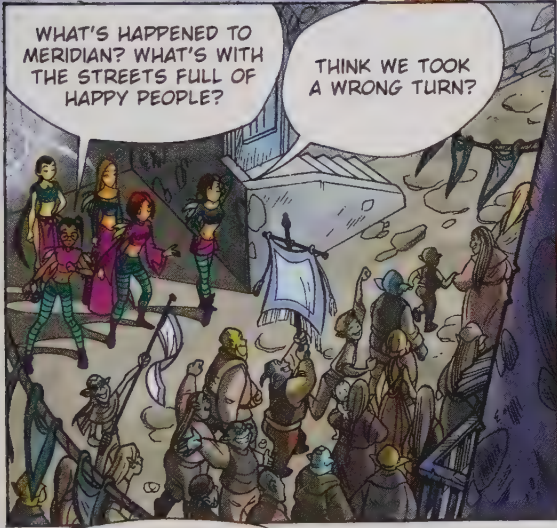
IT'S THE
PORTAL! SO
VATHEK CAME
THROUGH HERE...



...AND
HOPEFULLY, IT'LL
TAKE US RIGHT
TO HIM!

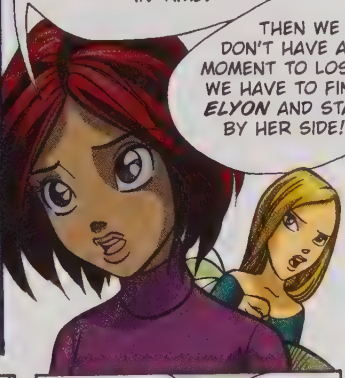


WOW!



WHAT'S HAPPENED TO
MERIDIAN? WHAT'S WITH
THE STREETS FULL OF
HAPPY PEOPLE?

THINK WE TOOK
A WRONG TURN?



IT MUST BE A CELEBRATION
FOR THE CORONATION!
WE GOT HERE JUST
IN TIME!

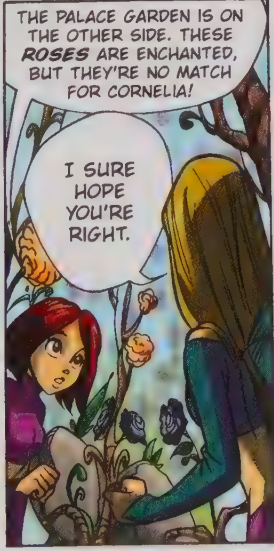
THEN WE
DON'T HAVE A
MOMENT TO LOSE.
WE HAVE TO FIND
ELYON AND STAY
BY HER SIDE!

173



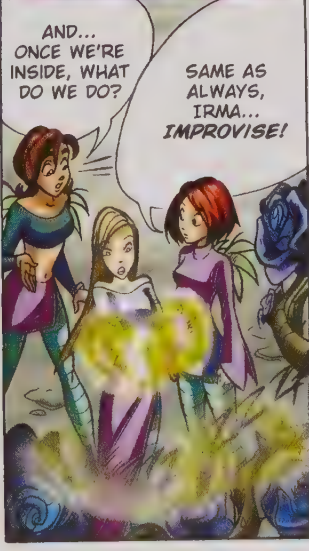
WHICH MEANS
WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY
INTO PHOBOS'S CASTLE.

FOLLOW ME!
I KNOW A
SHORTCUT!



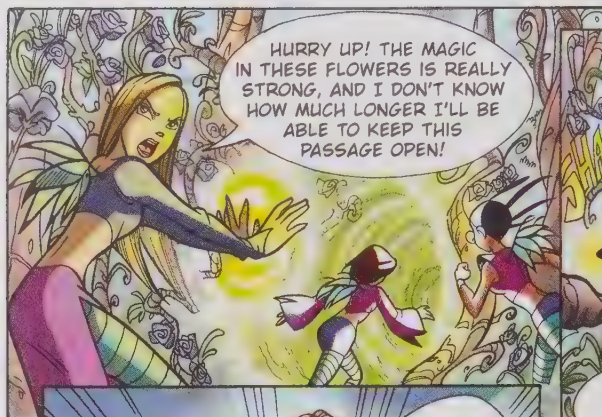
THE PALACE GARDEN IS ON
THE OTHER SIDE. THESE
ROSES ARE ENCHANTED,
BUT THEY'RE NO MATCH
FOR CORNELIA!

I SURE
HOPE
YOU'RE
RIGHT.

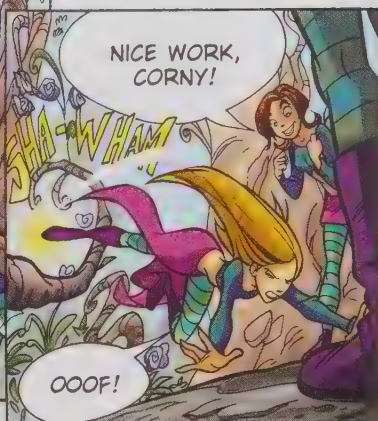


AND...
ONCE WE'RE
INSIDE, WHAT
DO WE DO?

SAME AS
ALWAYS,
IRMA...
IMPROVISE!



HURRY UP! THE MAGIC IN THESE FLOWERS IS REALLY STRONG, AND I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I'LL BE ABLE TO KEEP THIS PASSAGE OPEN!



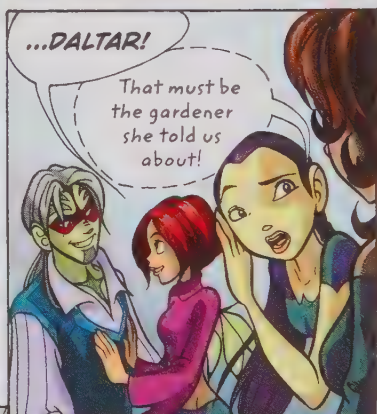
NICE WORK, CORNY!

OOOF!



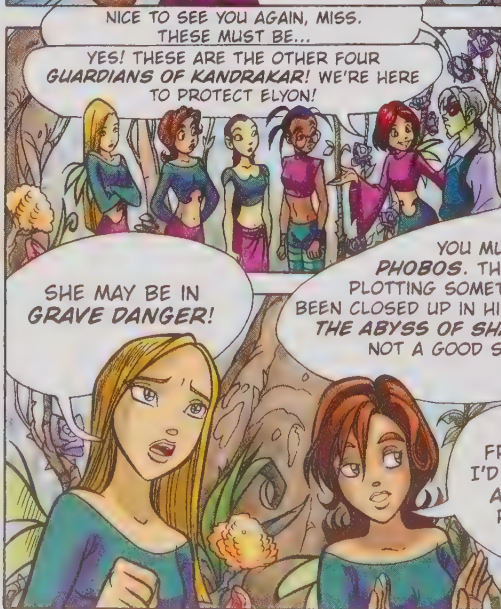
WELL, WELL, WELL! WHAT A SURPRISE!

HI! I WAS REALLY HOPING WE'D SEE YOU...



...DALTAR!

That must be the gardener she told us about!



NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN, MISS. THESE MUST BE...

YES! THESE ARE THE OTHER FOUR GUARDIANS OF KANDRAKAR! WE'RE HERE TO PROTECT ELYON!

SHE MAY BE IN GRAVE DANGER!

YOU MUST MEAN **PHOBOS**. THE PRINCE IS PLOTTING SOMETHING! HE'S BEEN CLOSED UP IN HIS HIDEAWAY, **THE ABYSS OF SHADOWS...** NOT A GOOD SIGN.

FROM THE NAME, I'D GUESS IT'S NOT A VERY CHEERY PLACE EITHER.

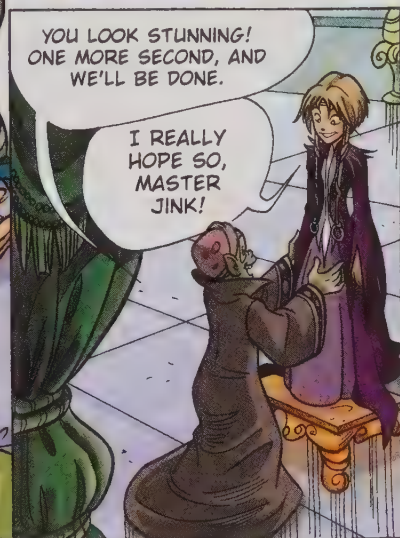
WE HAVE
TO TALK TO
ELYON RIGHT
AWAY!

THAT WON'T
BE EASY. THE
PRINCESS IS IN HER
CHAMBERS, AND THE
MURMURERS ARE
PATROLLING THE
CASTLE.



YOU LOOK STUNNING!
ONE MORE SECOND, AND
WE'LL BE DONE.

I REALLY
HOPE SO,
MASTER
JINK!



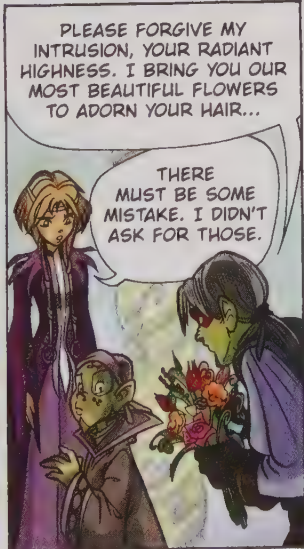
HUH? I ASKED
THAT WE NOT BE
DISTURBED! WHO
COULD THAT BE?

LET'S
FIND OUT...
COME IN!



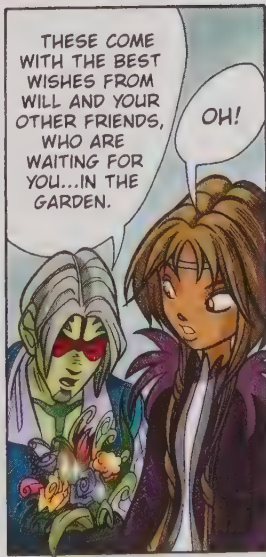
PLEASE FORGIVE MY
INTRUSION, YOUR RADIANT
HIGHNESS. I BRING YOU OUR
MOST BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS
TO ADORN YOUR HAIR...

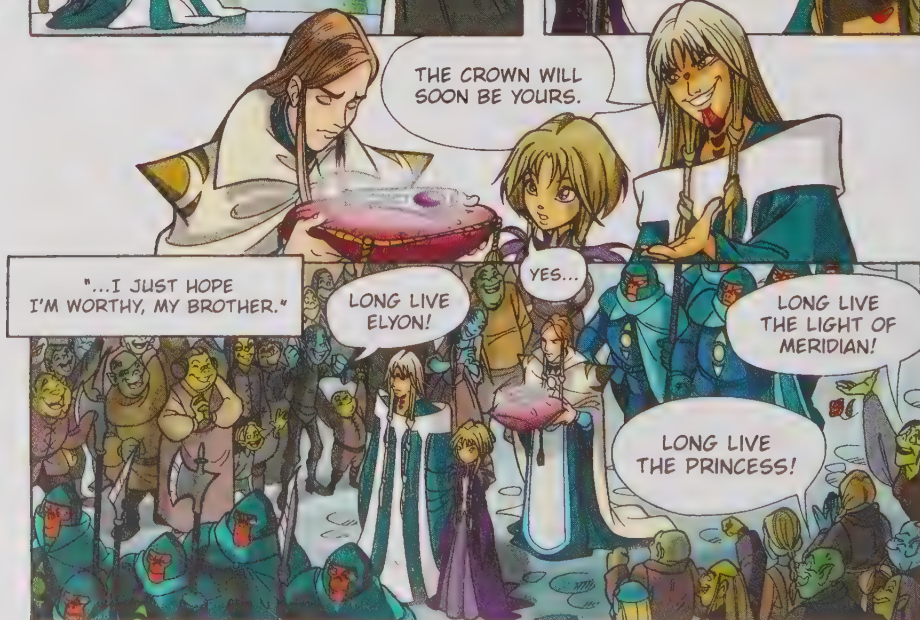
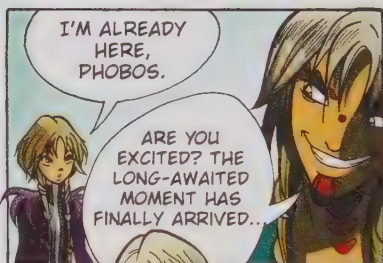
THERE
MUST BE SOME
MISTAKE. I DIDN'T
ASK FOR THOSE.

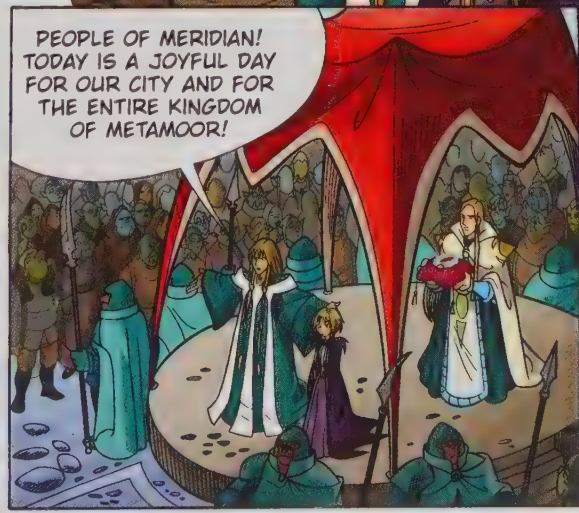
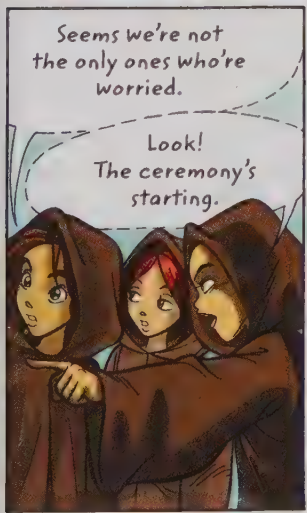
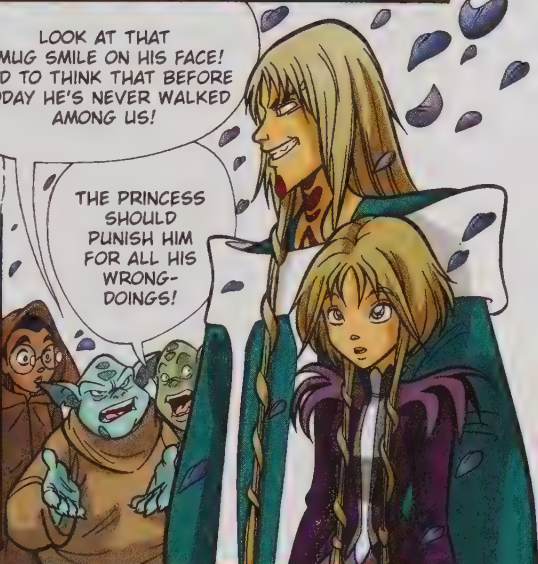
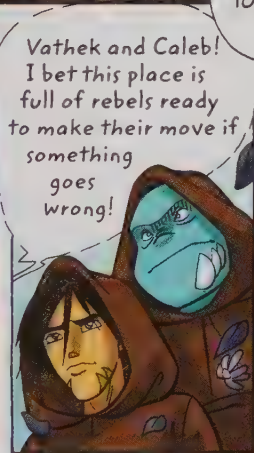


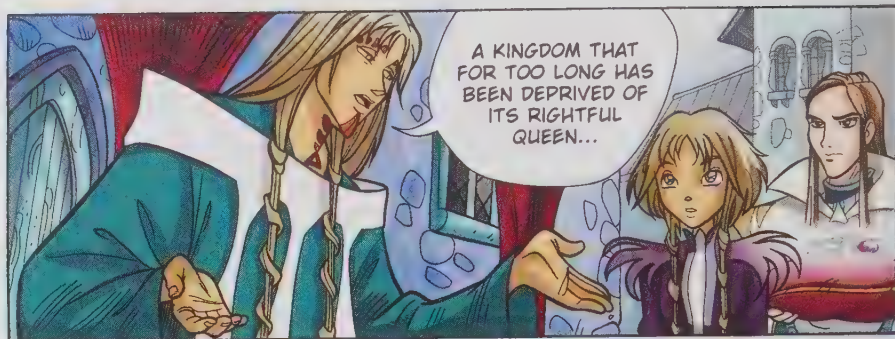
THESE COME
WITH THE BEST
WISHES FROM
WILL AND YOUR
OTHER FRIENDS,
WHO ARE
WAITING FOR
YOU...IN THE
GARDEN.

OH!

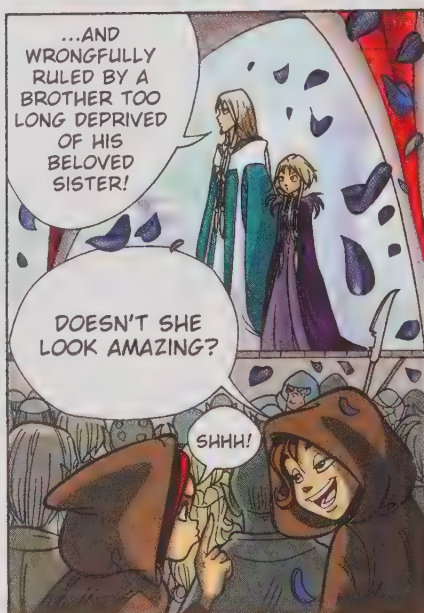








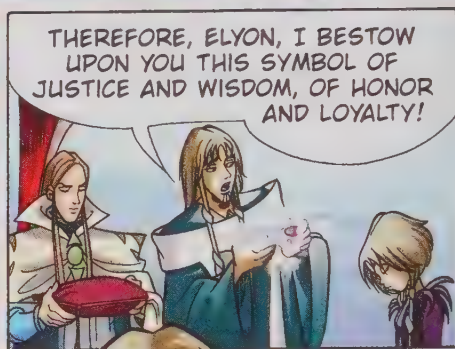
A KINGDOM THAT
FOR TOO LONG HAS
BEEN DEPRIVED OF
ITS RIGHTFUL
QUEEN...



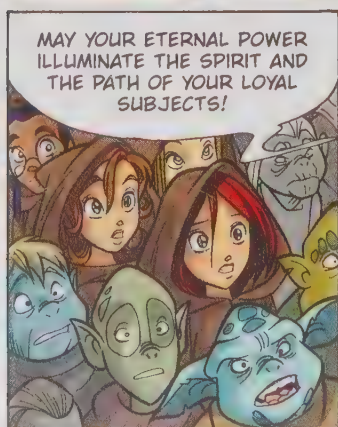
...AND
WRONGLY
RULED BY A
BROTHER TOO
LONG DEPRIVED
OF HIS
BELOVED
SISTER!

DOESN'T SHE
LOOK AMAZING?

SHHH!



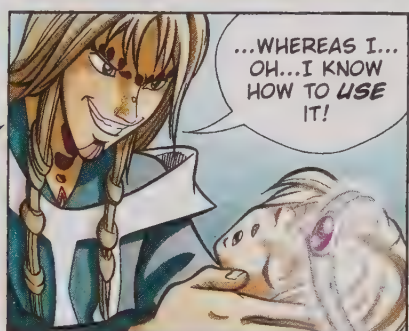
THEREFORE, ELYON, I BESTOW
UPON YOU THIS SYMBOL OF
JUSTICE AND WISDOM, OF HONOR
AND LOYALTY!

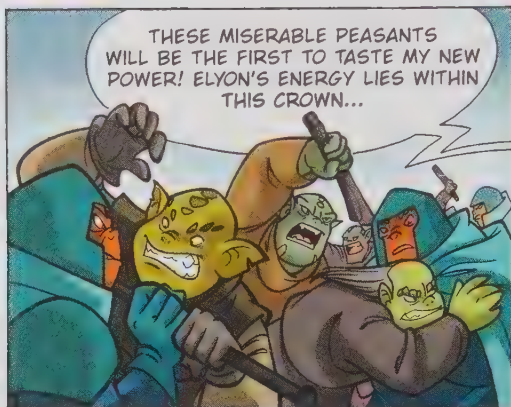


MAY YOUR ETERNAL POWER
ILLUMINATE THE SPIRIT AND
THE PATH OF YOUR LOYAL
SUBJECTS!



ALL HAIL THE
PRINCESS OF
MERIDIAN...

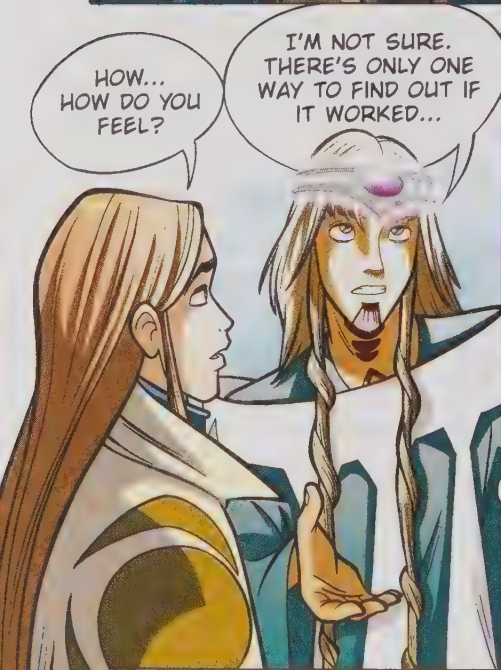




THESE MISERABLE PEASANTS
WILL BE THE FIRST TO TASTE MY NEW
POWER! ELYON'S ENERGY LIES WITHIN
THIS CROWN...



...AND NOW IT
IS MINE!



HOW...
HOW DO YOU
FEEL?

I'M NOT SURE.
THERE'S ONLY ONE
WAY TO FIND OUT IF
IT WORKED...



I WILL ERASE THESE WORTHLESS
CREATURES WITH A WAVE OF MY HAND.
WRETCHED PEOPLE OF MERIDIAN! I'VE
ALWAYS LONGED TO DO THIS!
HA-HA-HA!

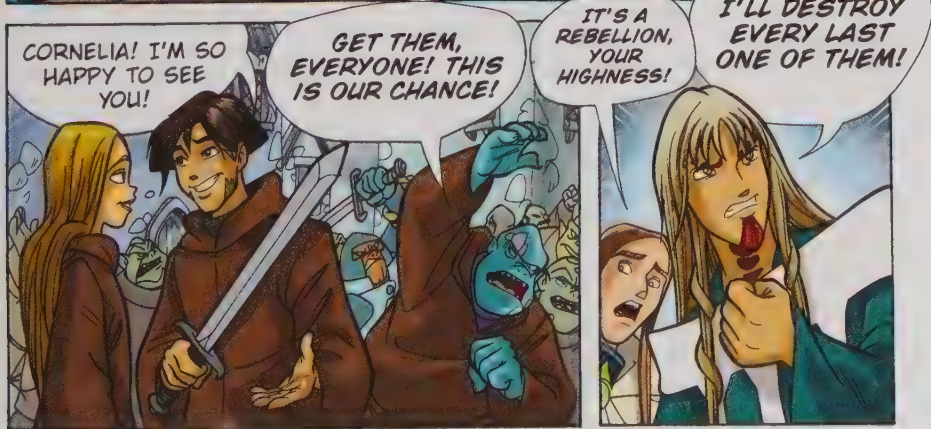
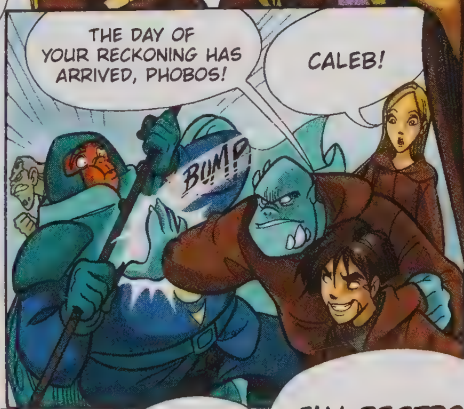
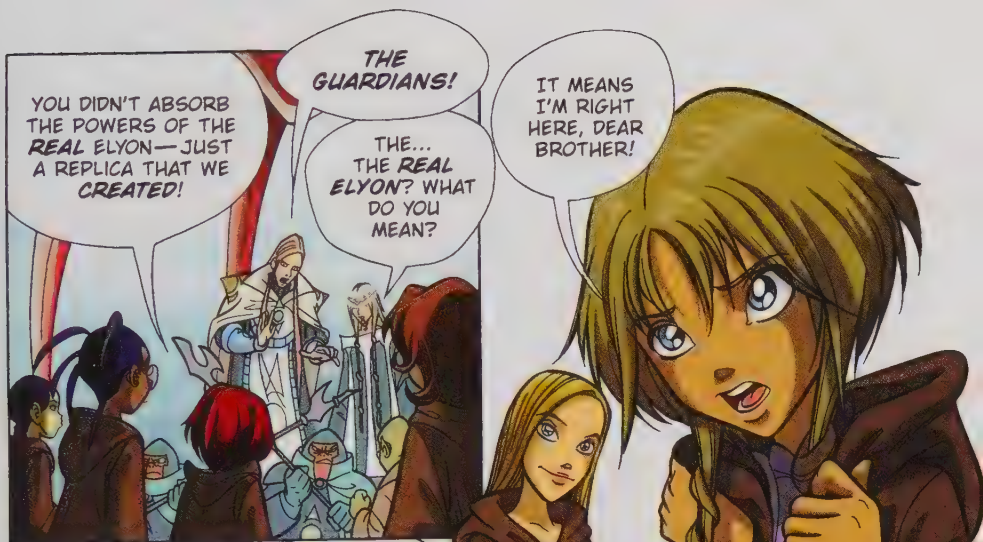


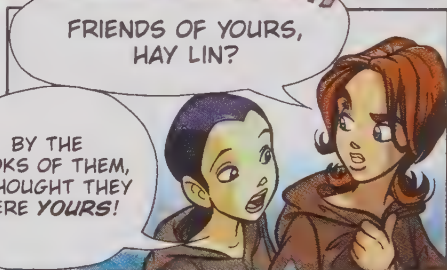
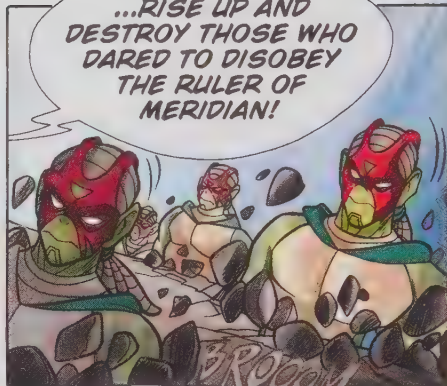
AH!

HUH?

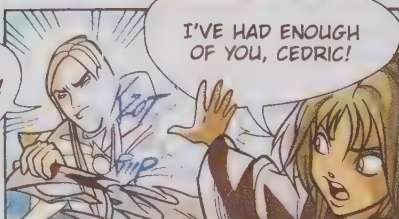
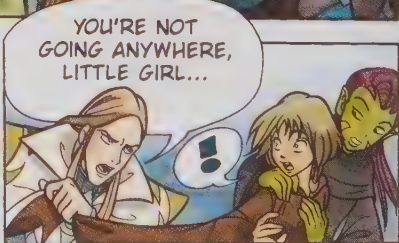


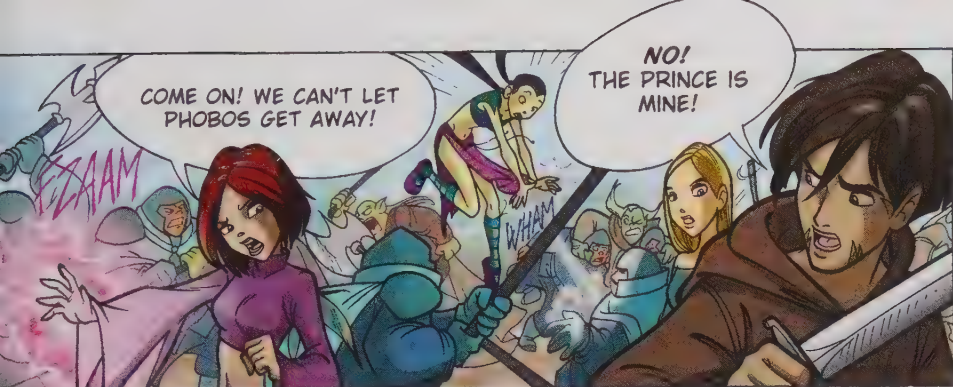
DON'T STRAIN
YOURSELF, PHOBOS!
YOU **DON'T HAVE**
ANY NEW
POWERS!





BY THE LOOKS OF THEM, I THOUGHT THEY WERE YOURS!





COME ON! WE CAN'T LET
PHOBOS GET AWAY!

NO!
THE PRINCE IS
MINE!

CALEB!
I'VE HEARD YOUR NAME
QUITE A BIT LATELY.
SO IT'S TRUE! YOU'VE
REBELLED AGAINST
YOUR **MASTER!**

YOU'RE
NOT MASTER
OF ANYTHING,
PHOBOS! NOTHING
HERE BELONGS
TO YOU!



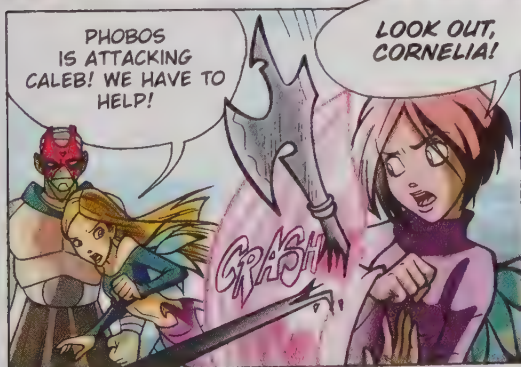
TO THINK
YOU WERE
ONCE NOTHING,
CALEB! JUST A
MURMURER—ONE
OF MY
CREATIONS!

I WAS A
MURMURER
CAPABLE OF
REASON! WHEN
I FINALLY OPENED
MY EYES, I KNEW
WHICH SIDE TO
CHOOSE!



A MURMURER
WITH A WILL OF ITS OWN IS
A MISTAKE! AND MISTAKES
MUST BE REMEDIED!

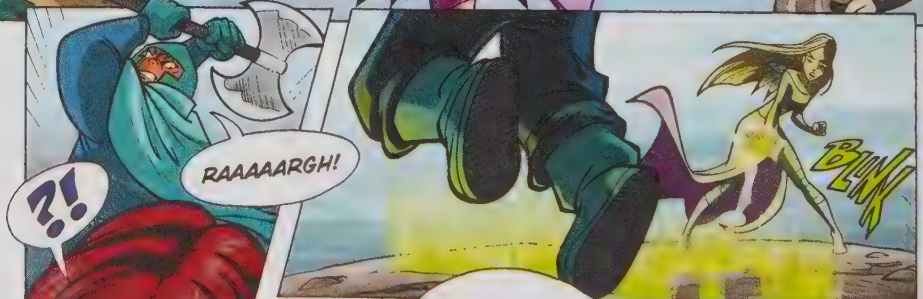
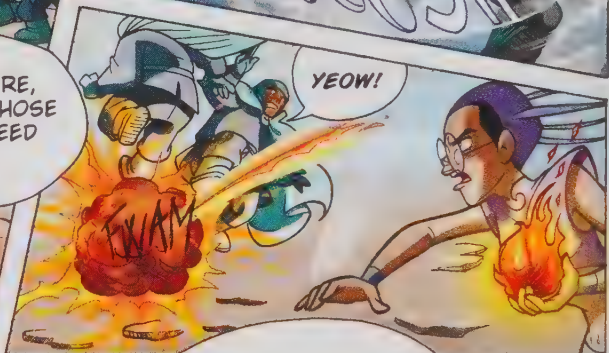
AAAAH!

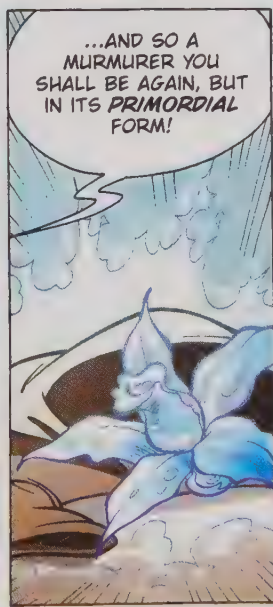
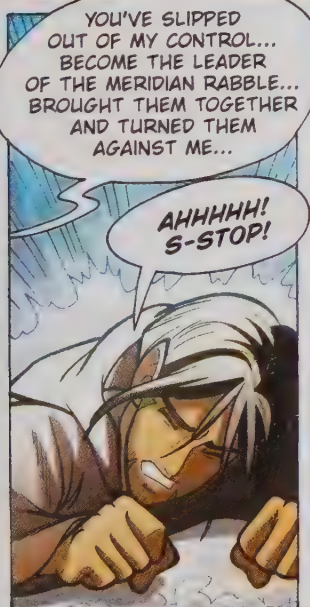
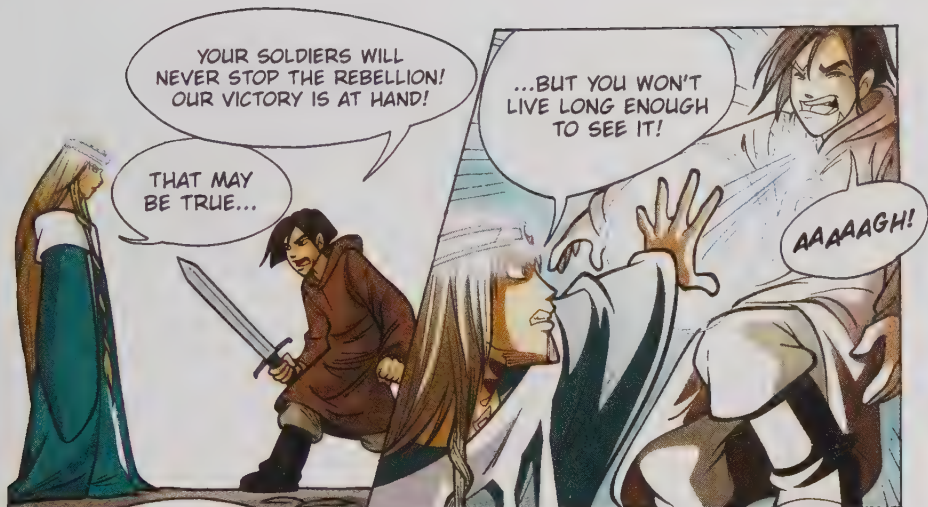


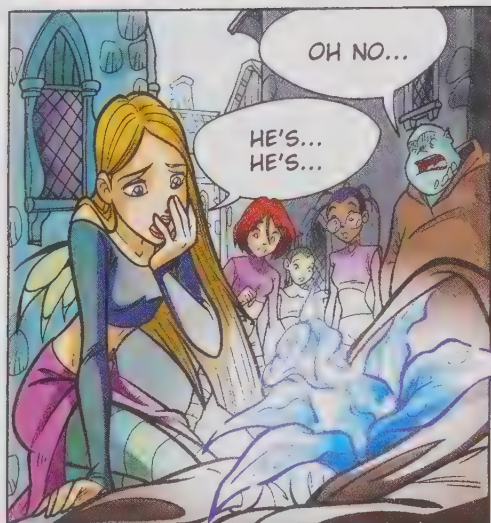
PHOBOS
IS ATTACKING
CALEB! WE HAVE TO
HELP!

LOOK OUT,
CORNELIA!

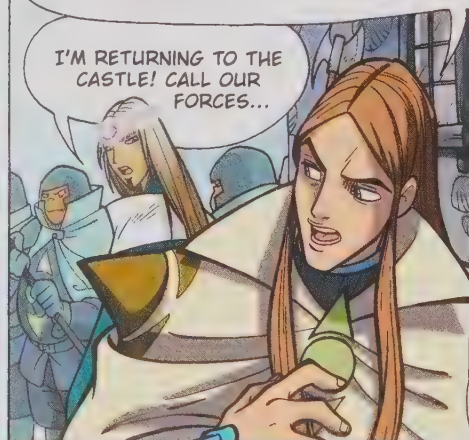








SIRE! THE UPRISING HAS SPREAD THROUGHOUT MERIDIAN! WE'LL NEED EVERY ONE OF OUR SOLDIERS AND ALL THE ANNIHILATORS!





THIS...THIS
WASN'T SUPPOSED
TO HAPPEN!



WHY?



"WHY?"



END OF
CHAPTER 11

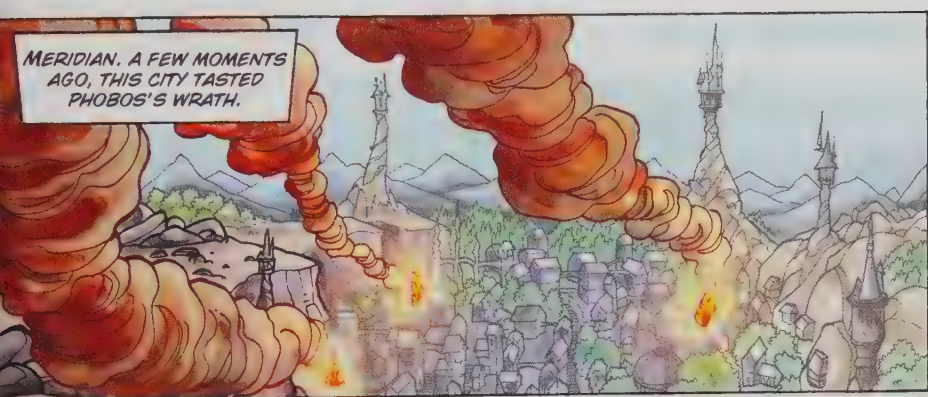


SO BE IT FOREVER

“
I don't know if
I'll do it.
”



MERIDIAN. A FEW MOMENTS
AGO, THIS CITY TASTED
PHOBOS'S WRATH.



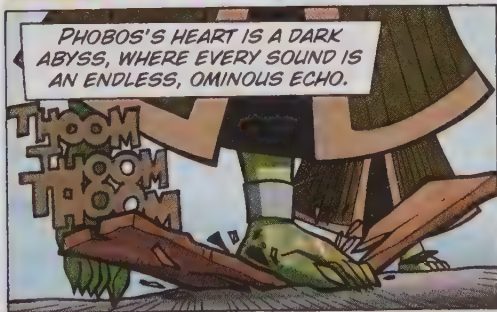
THE PRINCE OF METAMOOR
FORCED HIS SUBJECTS TO
LOOK INTO THE DEPTHS OF
HIS BLACK HEART...

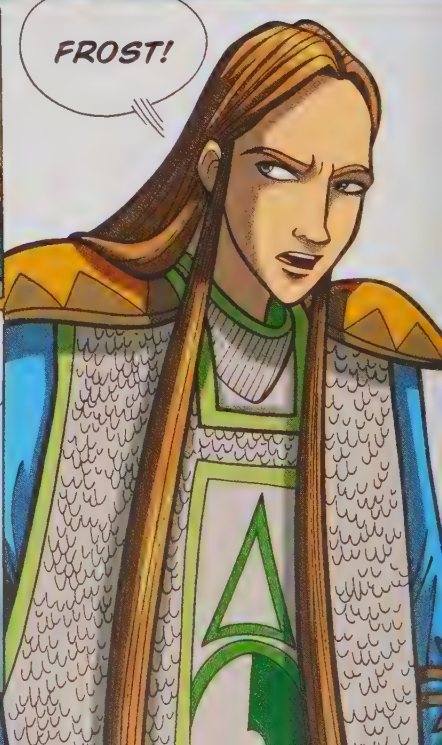
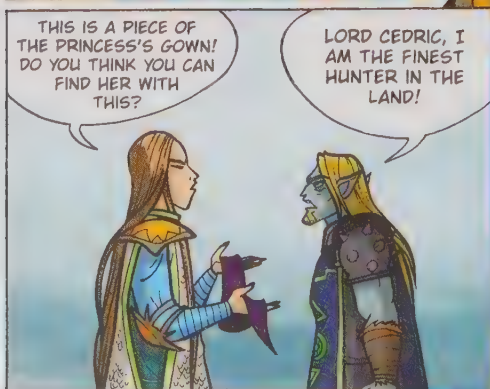
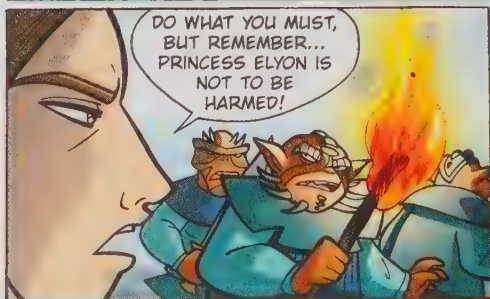


...AND THEY SAW
PURE TERROR.



PHOBOS'S HEART IS A DARK
ABYSS, WHERE EVERY SOUND IS
AN ENDLESS, OMINOUS ECHO.





YES, BUT THE
GIRL AND HER
FRIENDS ARE
SNEAKY.

I PROMISE SHE
WON'T GET AWAY
FROM ME. I CAN
SMELL HER
TRAIL.

THEN GO
AND BRING HER
TO ME!

CEDRIC!

RETURN TO THE CASTLE
AT ONCE! LEAVE FROST
IN COMMAND AND LET
THE SOLDIERS DO
THE DIRTY WORK!

YOU AND I MUST
PREPARE FOR THE
FINAL BATTLE. COME
WITH ME...

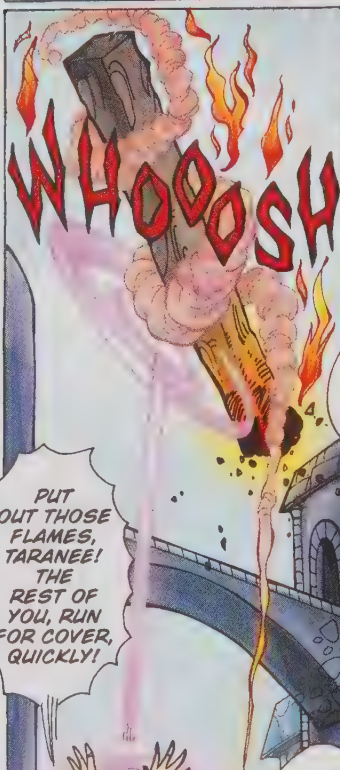
"...AND LEAVE MERIDIAN
TO ITS FATE!"

LOOK OUT!

EEEEK!

"THE MOMENT OF
TRUTH HAS ARRIVED!"

NOOO!
STOP!



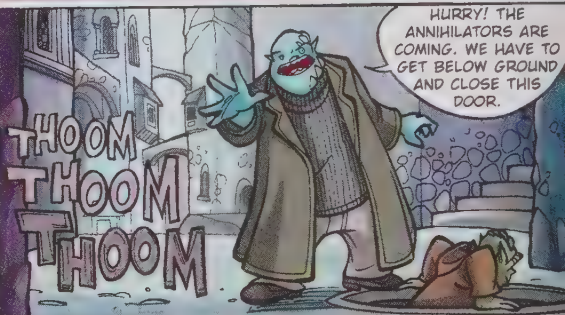
194

PUT
OUT THOSE
FLAMES,
TARANEE!
THE
REST OF
YOU, RUN
FOR COVER,
QUICKLY!

MAY THE
STAR OF
MERIDIAN
PROTECT
YOU,
GIRLS.

COME ON!
HELP ME
SHUT
THIS!

COMING,
VATHEK!



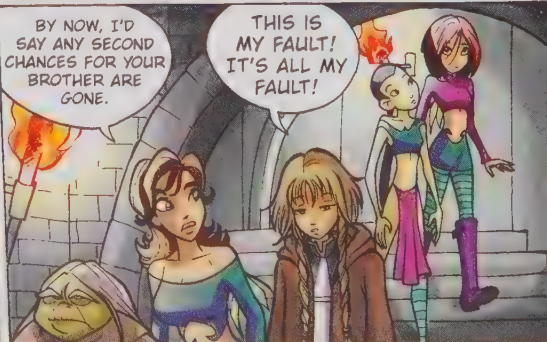
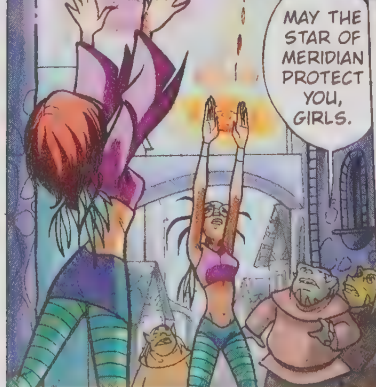
HURRY! THE
ANNIHILATORS ARE
COMING. WE HAVE TO
GET BELOW GROUND
AND CLOSE THIS
DOOR.

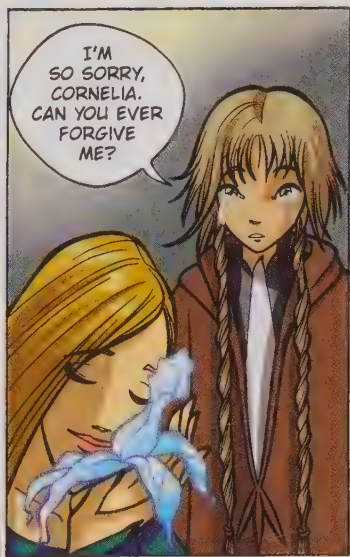
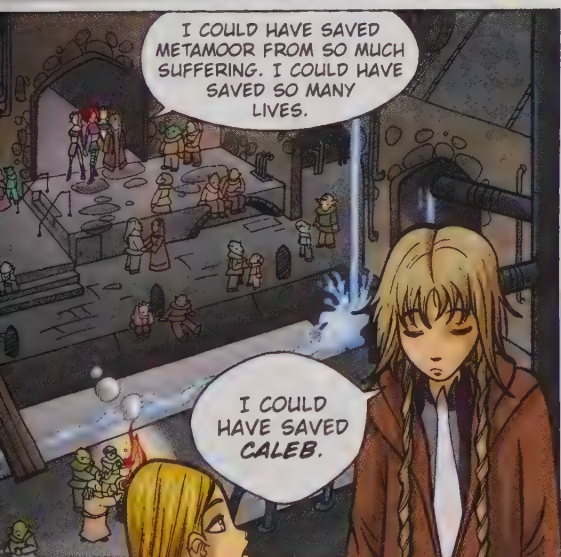
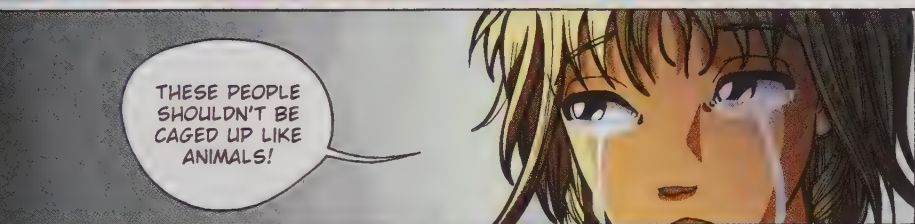
THIS IS A
DISASTER!
THEY'RE
DESTROYING
THE CITY!

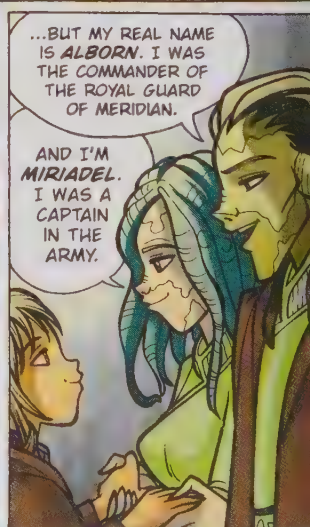
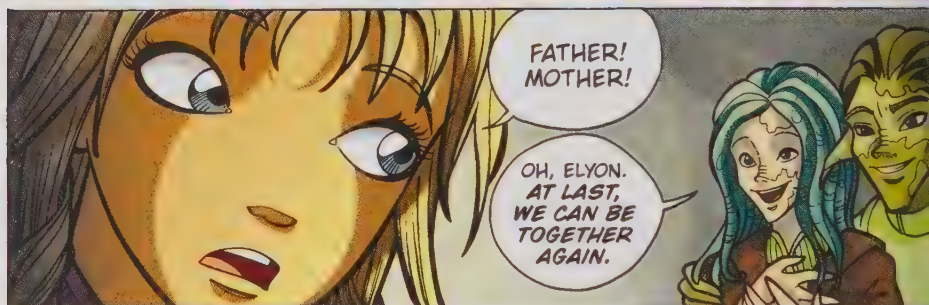
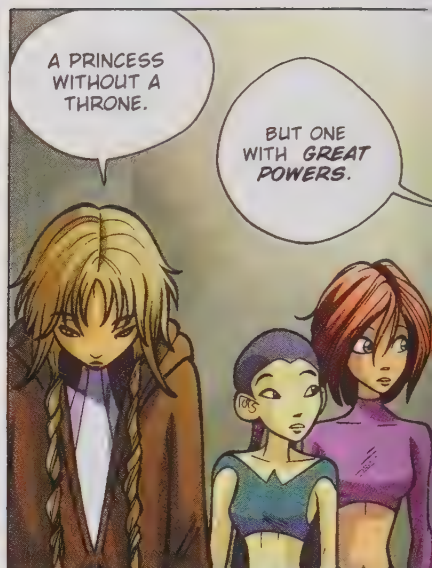
THAT'S
EXACTLY
WHAT PHOBOS
WANTS!

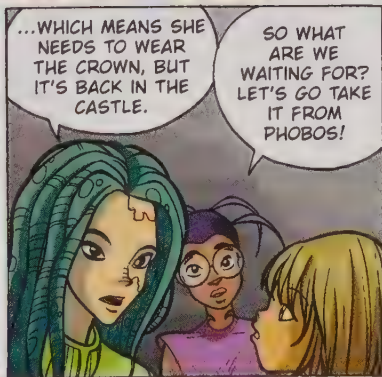
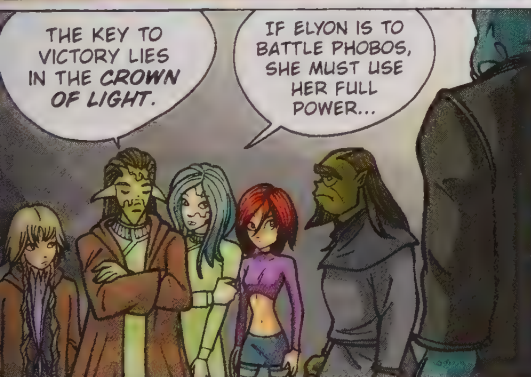
BY NOW, I'D
SAY ANY SECOND
CHANCES FOR YOUR
BROTHER ARE
GONE.

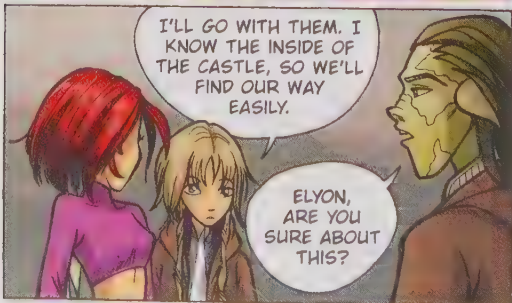
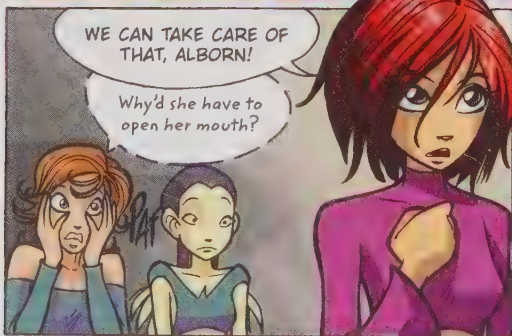
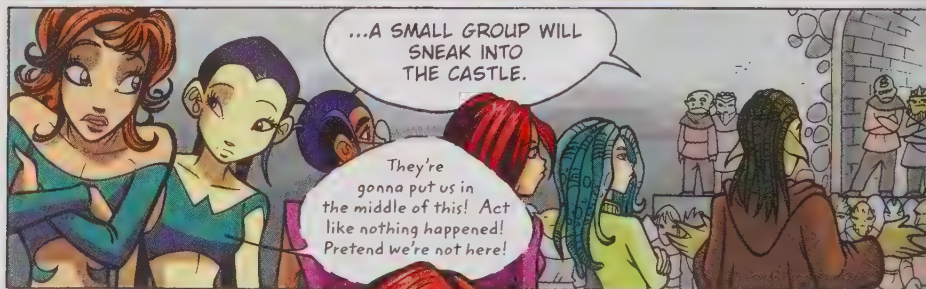
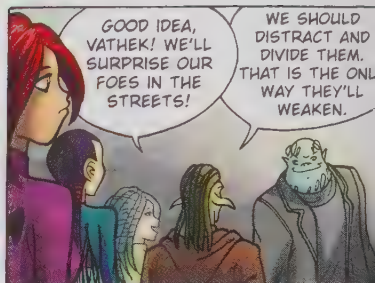
THIS IS
MY FAULT!
IT'S ALL MY
FAULT!

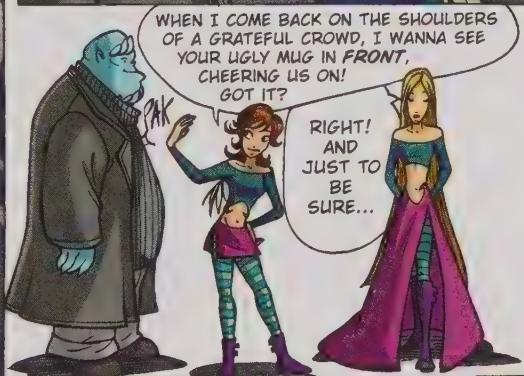
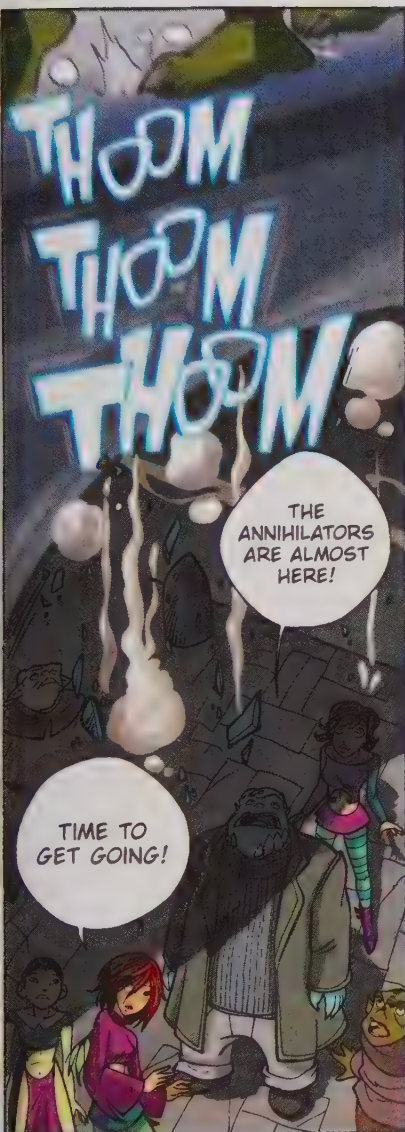








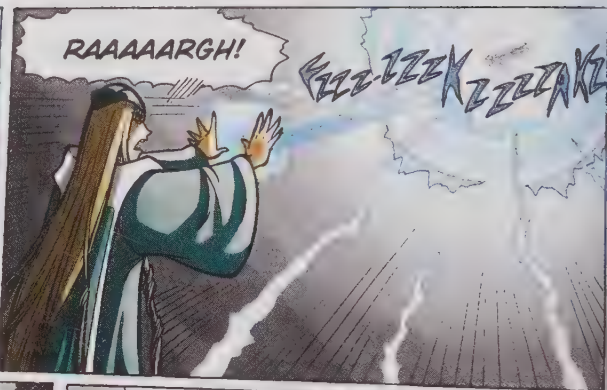




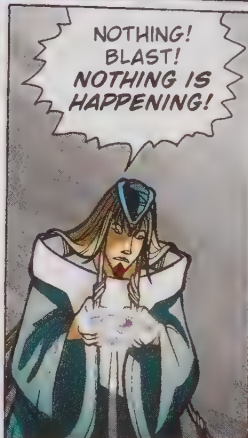
"THE CROWN
AWAITS YOU!"



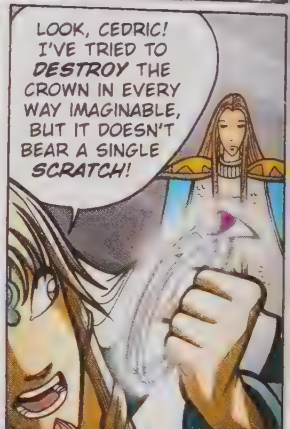
RAAAAARGH!



NOTHING!
BLAST!
NOTHING IS
HAPPENING!



LOOK, CEDRIC!
I'VE TRIED TO
DESTROY THE
CROWN IN EVERY
WAY IMAGINABLE,
BUT IT DOESN'T
BEAR A SINGLE
SCRATCH!



PENG

TENG



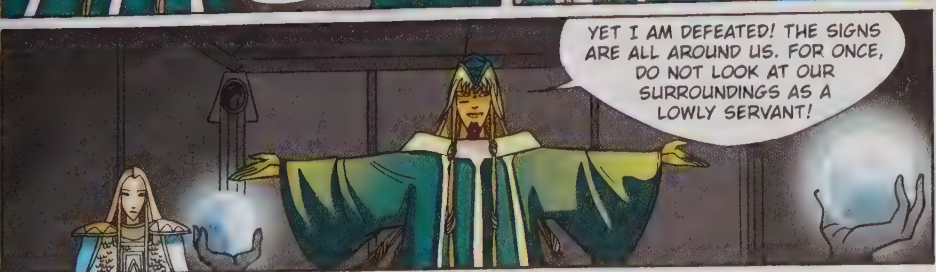
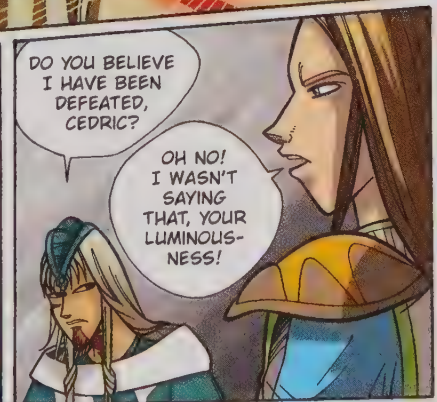
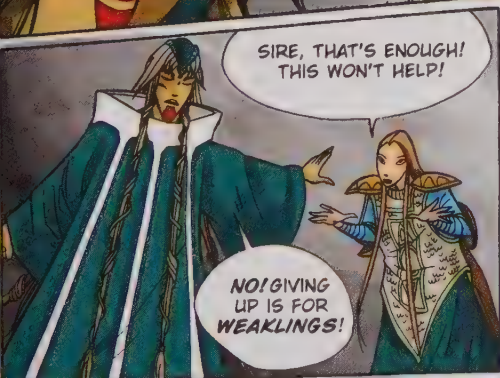
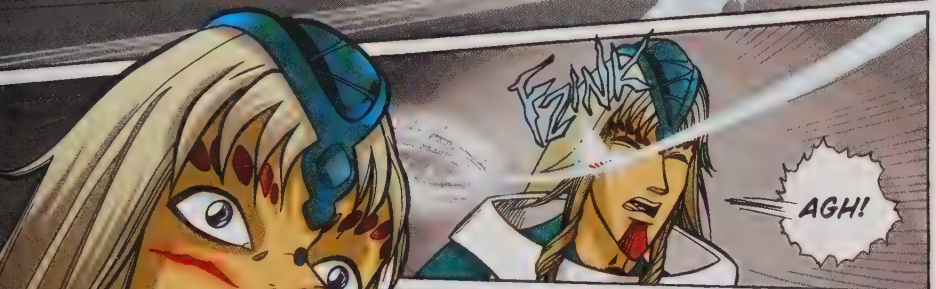
WHY?
WHY?
WHY?

CLANG
CLANG
CLANG



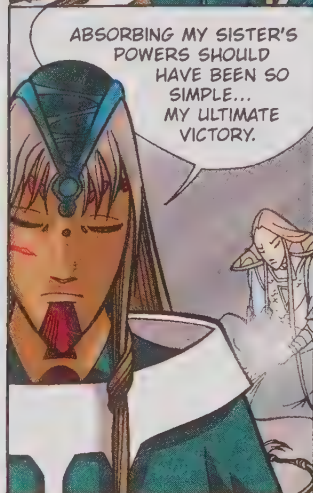
WHYYYYYYY?



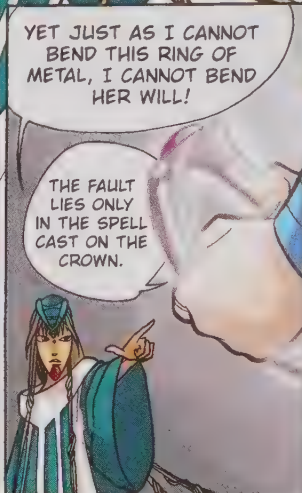




THE WORLD IS DYING!
I CONSUMED IT! NOW IT'S
IN SHAMBLES!

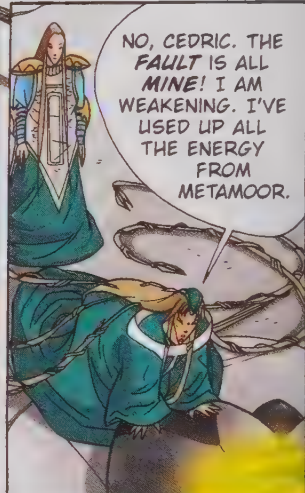


ABSORBING MY SISTER'S
POWERS SHOULD
HAVE BEEN SO
SIMPLE...
MY ULTIMATE
VICTORY.

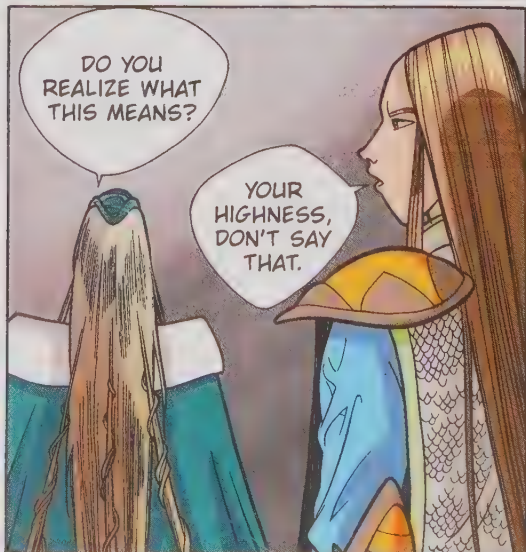


YET JUST AS I CANNOT
BEND THIS RING OF
METAL, I CANNOT BEND
HER WILL!

THE FAULT
LIES ONLY
IN THE SPELL
CAST ON THE
CROWN.



NO, CEDRIC. THE
FAULT IS ALL
MINE! I AM
WEAKENING. I'VE
USED UP ALL
THE ENERGY
FROM
METAMOOR.

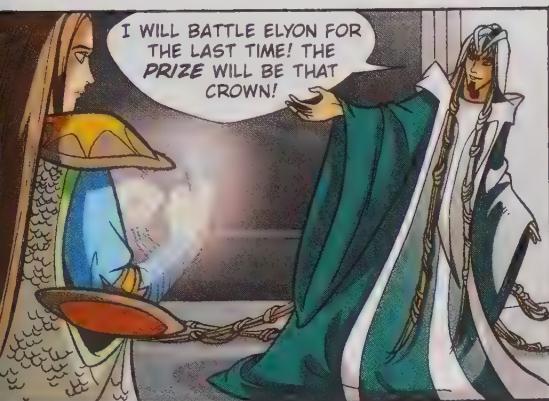


DO YOU
REALIZE WHAT
THIS MEANS?

YOUR
HIGHNESS,
DON'T SAY
THAT.



BUT I
WILL NOT
GO DOWN
WITHOUT
A FIGHT!
IF I CAN'T
HAVE THIS
CITY, THEN
NO ONE
WILL!



I WILL BATTLE ELYON FOR
THE LAST TIME! THE
PRIZE WILL BE THAT
CROWN!



A CROWN
THAT I NOW
PLACE IN
YOUR
CARE.

YOUR
HIGHNESS,
I...

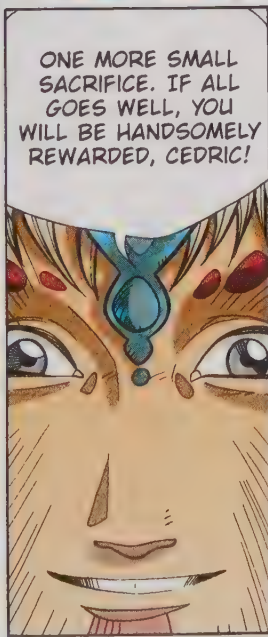


I KNOW! YOU'RE AFRAID YOU
WON'T BE ABLE TO PROTECT
IT, BUT HAVE NO FEAR. I
WILL TURN YOU INTO THE
PERFECT
GUARDIAN!



I STILL HAVE
ENOUGH POWER
TO PLAY THIS
GAME TO THE
VERY END.

I WILL
FOLLOW YOU
ALL THE WAY.
WHAT DO YOU
COMMAND OF
ME?

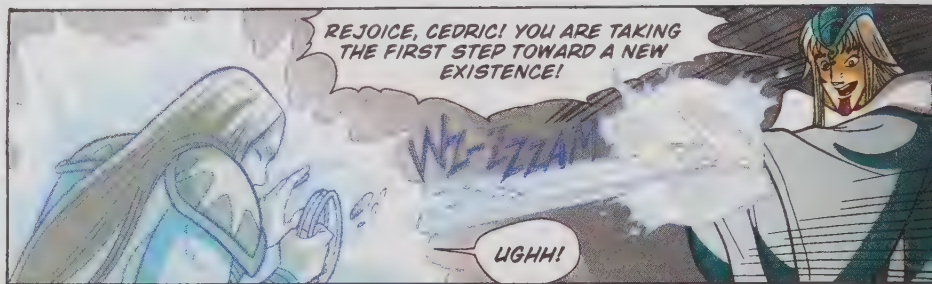


ONE MORE SMALL
SACRIFICE. IF ALL
GOES WELL, YOU
WILL BE HANDSOMELY
REWARDED, CEDRIC!



AT LONG LAST
YOU WILL BE
ADMITTED INTO
MY COURT OF
MURMURERS!

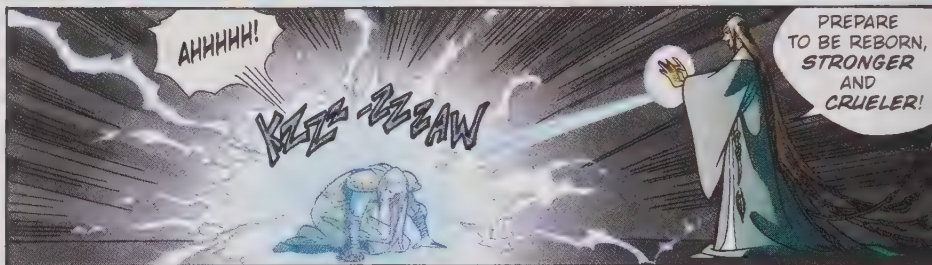
COMMAND ME,
YOUR
HIGHNESS!



REJOICE, CEDRIC! YOU ARE TAKING THE FIRST STEP TOWARD A NEW EXISTENCE!

WUZZAM

UGH!!



AHHHHH!

KZZZ-ZZAW

PREPARE TO BE REBORN, STRONGER AND CRUELER!



PHOBOS WILLS IT SO!

RAAARGH!

KRAZZZAAK

MEANWHILE, IN THE STREETS OF MERIDIAN...

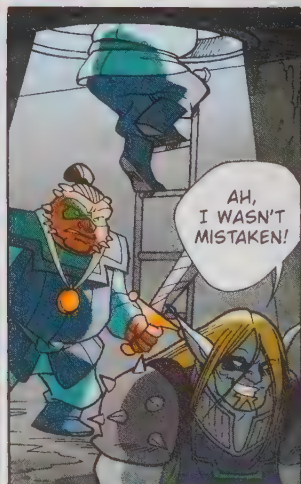
THE TIME HAS COME! I HEAR SOMETHING!

I HOPE SO! WE'VE SEARCHED EVERY NEIGHBORHOOD AND FOUND NOTHING.



YES, THE GOWN'S TRAIL LEADS RIGHT DOWN HERE.

OPEN THAT DRAIN COVER!



AH, I WASN'T MISTAKEN!



...LOOK
AT THESE
FOOTPRINTS.
THE REBELS
ARE HIDING
HERE.



THESE TRACKS
ARE FRESH! THEY
CAN'T HAVE LEFT
LONG AGO, AND
THE **PRINCESS**
WAS WITH
THEM!

GET GOING,
MEN!
HURRY!



THE GOWN...THE
GOWN IS NEARBY!

STAY ALERT!
ELYON WON'T BE
ALONE! BE READY TO...



!

HUH?



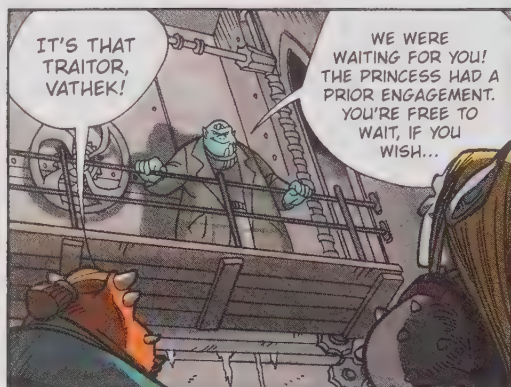
IT'S...
IT'S HER
GOWN!

YES, I CAN
SEE THAT! BUT
WHERE'S THE
PRINCESS?
WHERE ARE THE
REBELS?

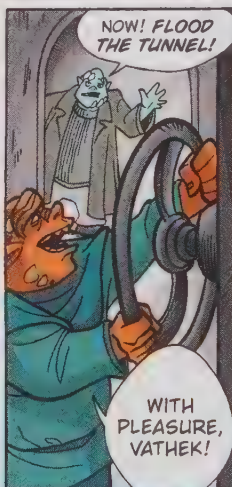


THERE!

LOOKING
FOR US?



WE WERE WAITING FOR YOU! THE PRINCESS HAD A PRIOR ENGAGEMENT. YOU'RE FREE TO WAIT, IF YOU WISH...



NOW! FLOOD THE TUNNEL!

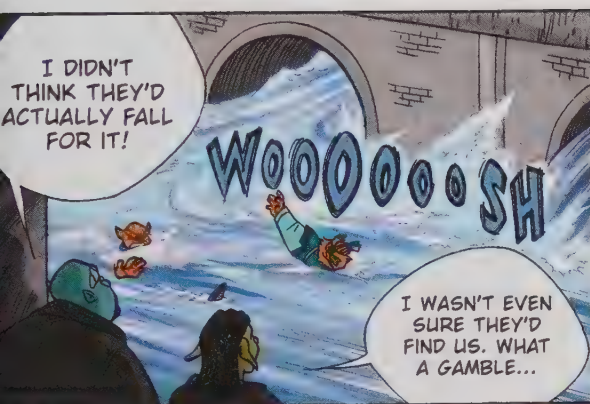
WITH PLEASURE, VATHEK!



RUUMBLE

OH NO! IT'S TOO LATE!

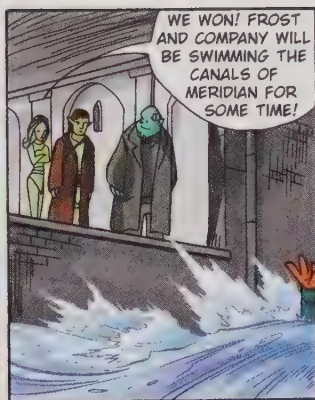
RAAARGH!



I DIDN'T
THINK THEY'D
ACTUALLY FALL
FOR IT!

WOOOOOSH

I WASN'T EVEN
SURE THEY'D
FIND US. WHAT
A GAMBLE...



WE WON! FROST
AND COMPANY WILL
BE SWIMMING THE
CANALS OF
MERIDIAN FOR
SOME TIME!



"WHO KNOWS?
A LITTLE DIP MIGHT
JUST BRING THEM
TO THEIR SENSES!"

YEOW!

FSHAKKAM

EEEEK!

AARGH!

SPASH



THEY'VE MADE
FOOLS OUT
OF US!

I KNOW!
BLAST!

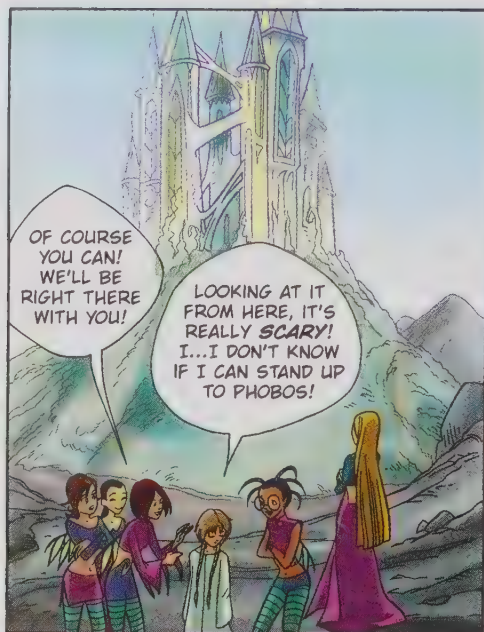
THOSE
WRETCHED
REBELS GOT
AWAY...



...AND
WORSE, I
DIDN'T FIND
ELYON!

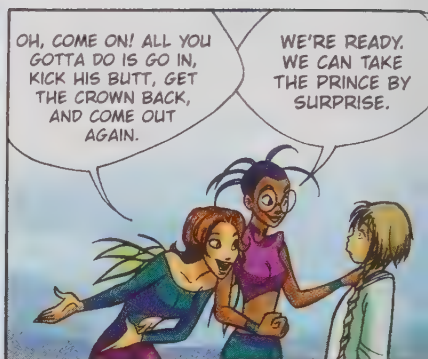


I...I DON'T
KNOW IF I
CAN DO
IT.



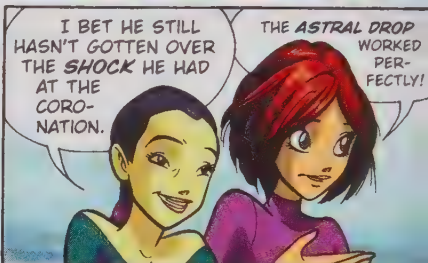
OF COURSE
YOU CAN!
WE'LL BE
RIGHT THERE
WITH YOU!

LOOKING AT IT
FROM HERE, IT'S
REALLY SCARY!
I...I DON'T KNOW
IF I CAN STAND UP
TO PHOBOS!



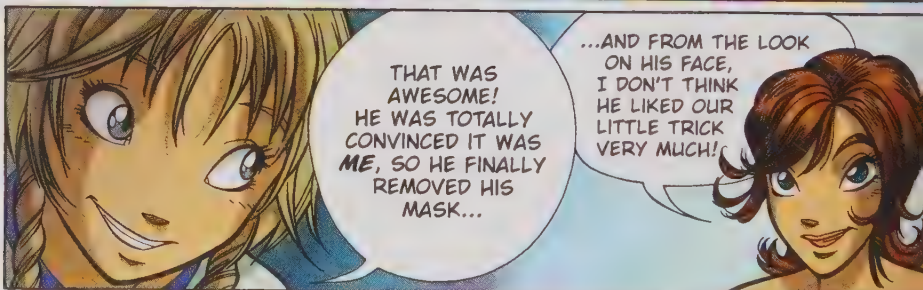
OH, COME ON! ALL YOU
GOTTA DO IS GO IN,
KICK HIS BUTT, GET
THE CROWN BACK,
AND COME OUT
AGAIN.

WE'RE READY.
WE CAN TAKE
THE PRINCE BY
SURPRISE.



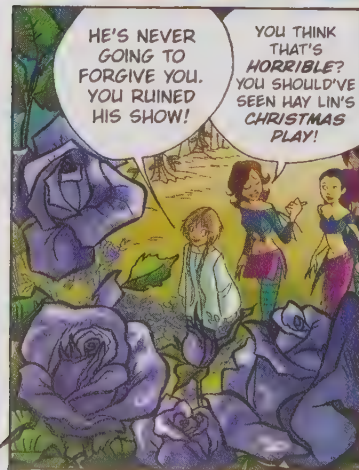
I BET HE STILL
HASN'T GOTTEN OVER
THE SHOCK HE HAD
AT THE
CORO-
NATION.

THE ASTRAL DROP
WORKED
PER-
FECTLY!



THAT WAS
AWESOME!
HE WAS TOTALLY
CONVINCED IT WAS
ME, SO HE FINALLY
REMOVED HIS
MASK...

...AND FROM THE LOOK
ON HIS FACE,
I DON'T THINK
HE LIKED OUR
LITTLE TRICK
VERY MUCH!



HE'S NEVER
GOING TO
FORGIVE YOU.
YOU RUINED
HIS SHOW!

YOU THINK
THAT'S
HORRIBLE?
YOU SHOULD'VE
SEEN HAY LIN'S
CHRISTMAS
PLAY!



IT WAS SO AWFUL THAT
AT THE END, THE AUDIENCE
DIDN'T THROW NORMAL
EGGS—THEY TOSSED
OSTRICH EGGS!

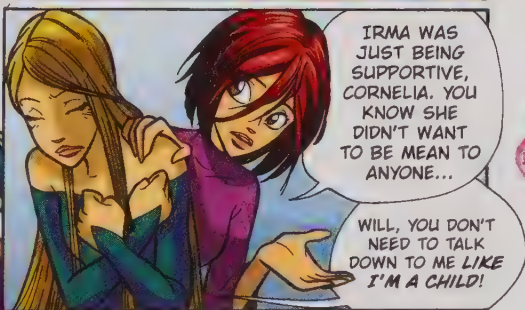
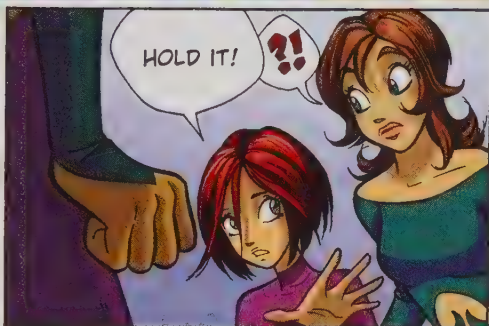
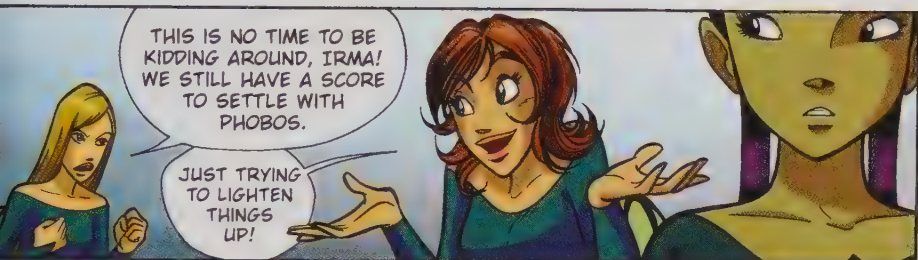
HA-HA-
HA!

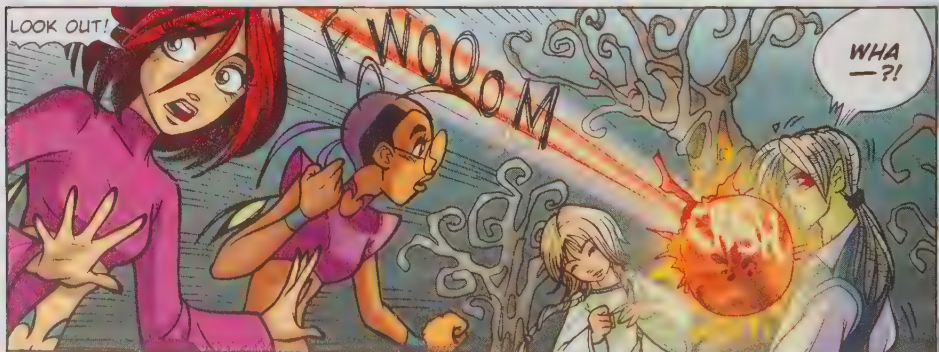
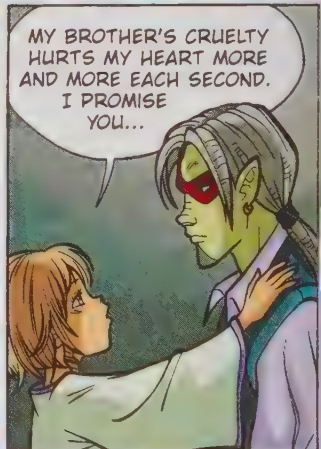
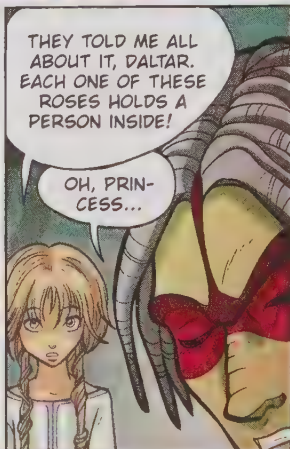
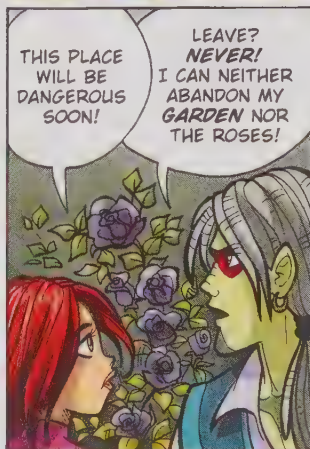
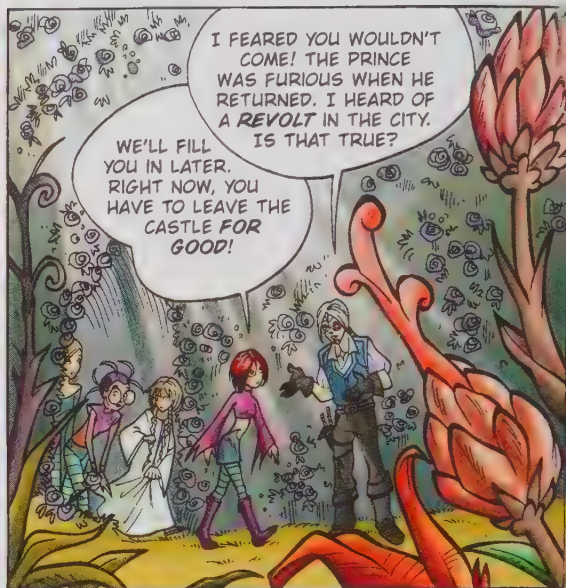


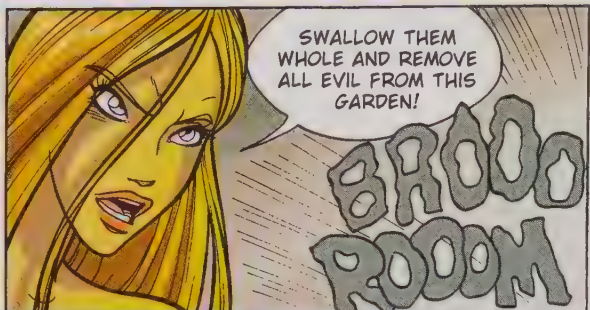
ENOUGH!

HUH?

?







EVEN IN KANDRAKAR,
EVERYONE IS WATCHING
W.I.T.C.H. WITH
BATED BREATH...



I'VE SAID
IT BEFORE AND
WILL SAY IT AGAIN,
MY WISE
FOLLOWERS...

...TIME IS UNFOLDING
IN WAYS I HAVE
NOT FORESEEN.

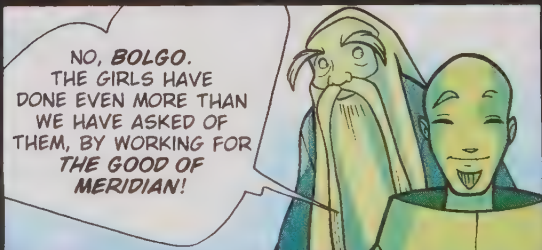


SOMETIMES IT ONLY
TAKES AN INSTANT TO
DISPLACE SOMETHING
THAT HAS EXISTED
FOR CENTURIES.

WHAT ARE THE
CONSEQUENCES,
ORACLE? PERHAPS WE
SHOULD INTERVENE.
THOSE GIRLS...



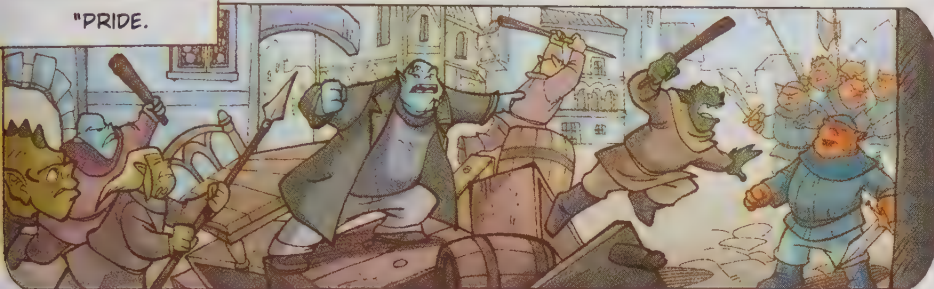
NO, **BOLGO**.
THE GIRLS HAVE
DONE EVEN MORE THAN
WE HAVE ASKED OF
THEM, BY WORKING FOR
**THE GOOD OF
MERIDIAN!**



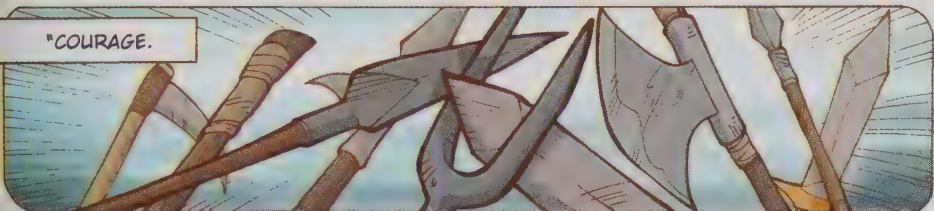
THESE BATTLES SIGNIFY CHANGE!
THE PEOPLE OF METAMOR ARE
REDISCOVERING THINGS THEY'D
LONG **FORGOTTEN...**



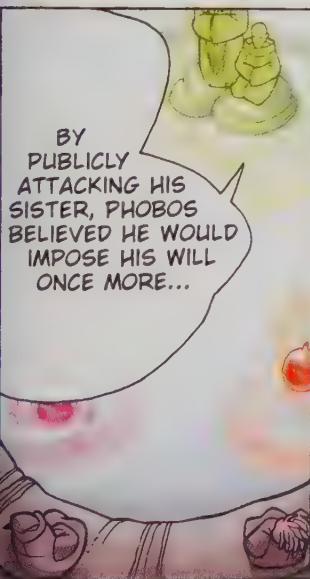
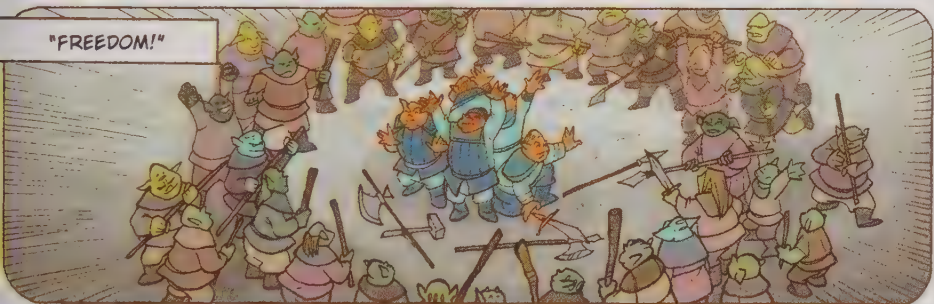
"PRIDE."



"COURAGE."



"FREEDOM!"



BY
PUBLICLY
ATTACKING HIS
SISTER, PHOBOS
BELIEVED HE WOULD
IMPOSE HIS WILL
ONCE MORE...

...BUT HE COMMITTED
A GRAVE ERROR.

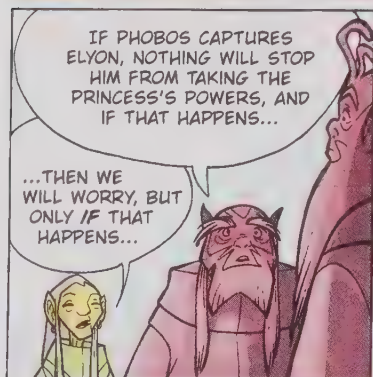


THE CONGREGATION
WILL NOT INTERVENE.
WE WILL WAIT
AND CALMLY JUDGE THE
UNFOLDING EVENTS.



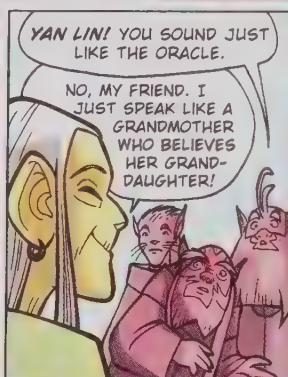


THERE'S SOMETHING HE'S NOT TELLING US. WHILE WE STAND HERE TALKING, THE GUARDIANS COULD BE IN PERIL!



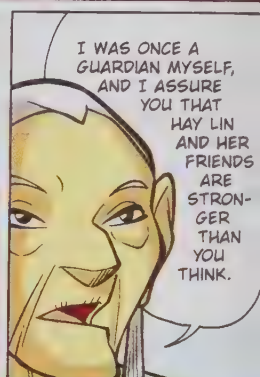
IF PHOBOS CAPTURES ELYON, NOTHING WILL STOP HIM FROM TAKING THE PRINCESS'S POWERS, AND IF THAT HAPPENS...

...THEN WE WILL WORRY, BUT ONLY IF THAT HAPPENS...

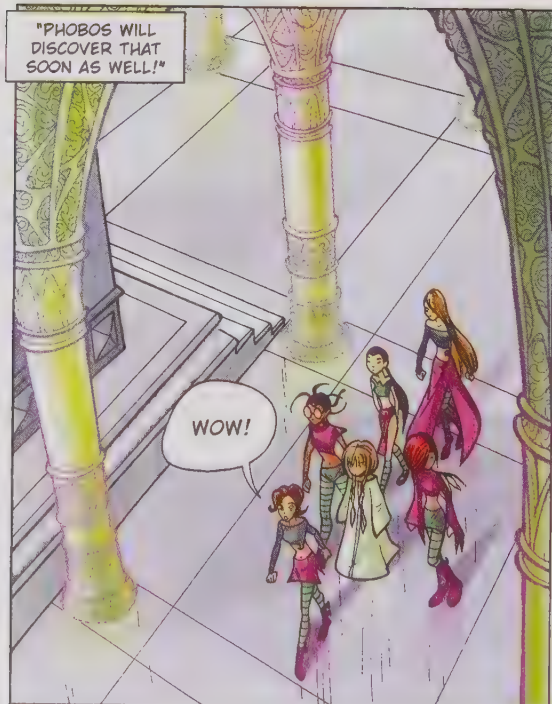


YAN LIN! YOU SOUND JUST LIKE THE ORACLE.

NO, MY FRIEND. I JUST SPEAK LIKE A GRANDMOTHER WHO BELIEVES HER GRAND-DAUGHTER!

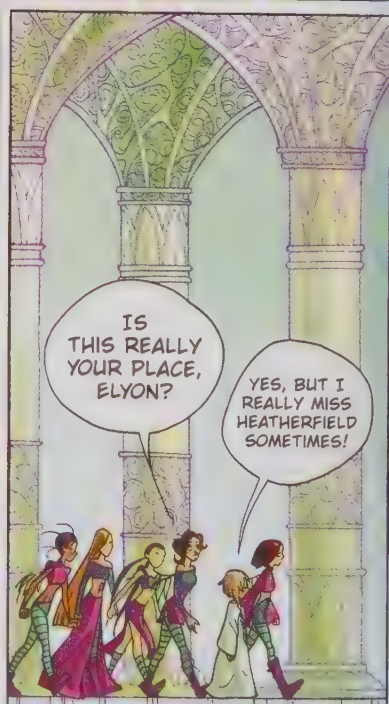


I WAS ONCE A GUARDIAN MYSELF, AND I ASSURE YOU THAT HAY LIN AND HER FRIENDS ARE STRONGER THAN YOU THINK.



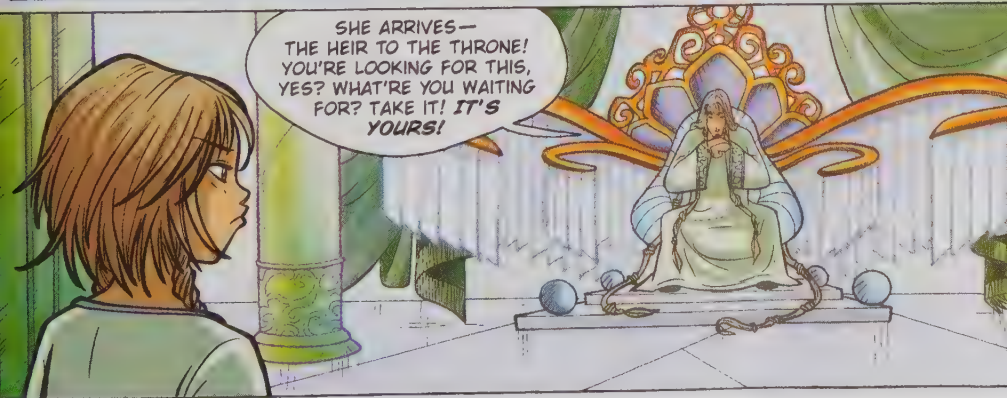
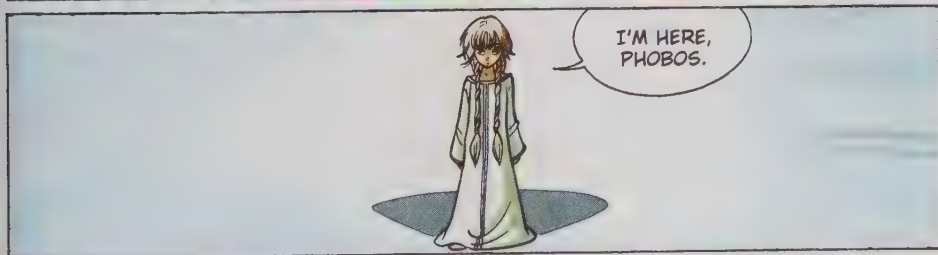
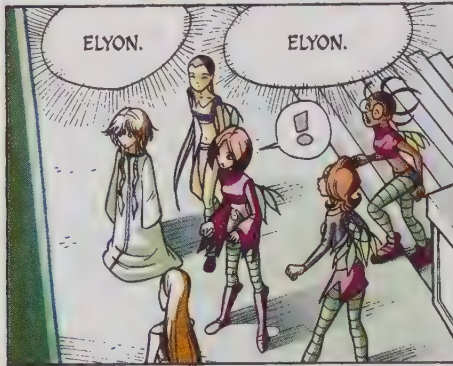
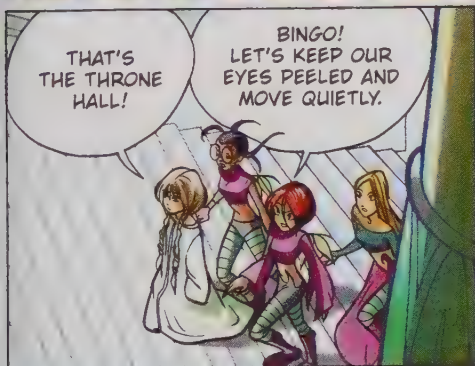
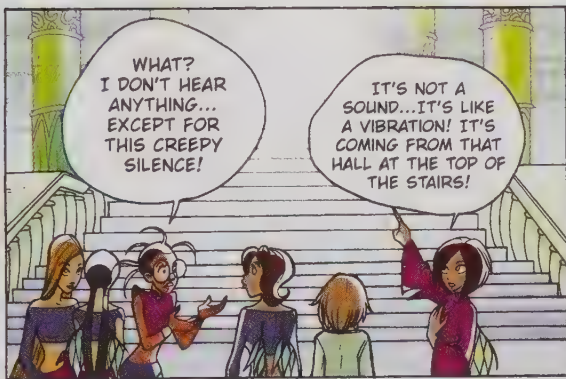
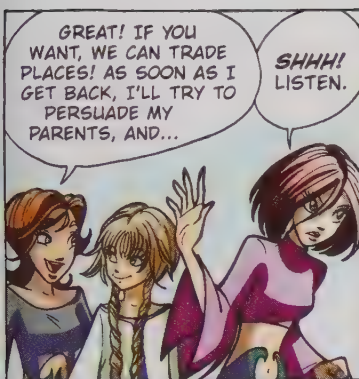
PHOBOS WILL DISCOVER THAT SOON AS WELL!

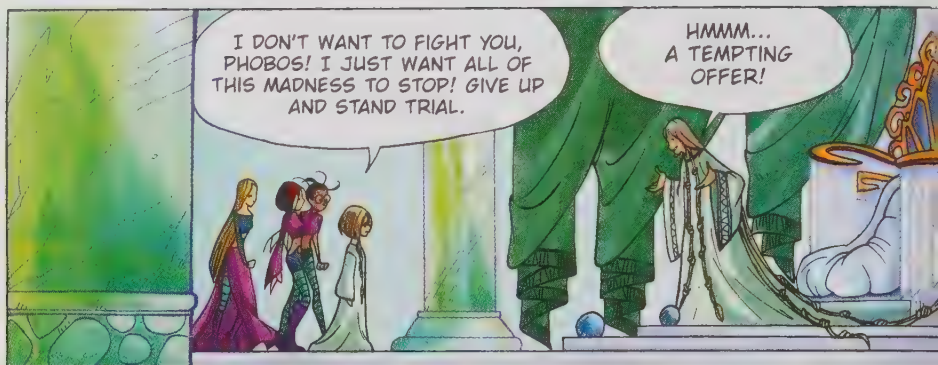
WOW!



IS THIS REALLY YOUR PLACE, ELYON?

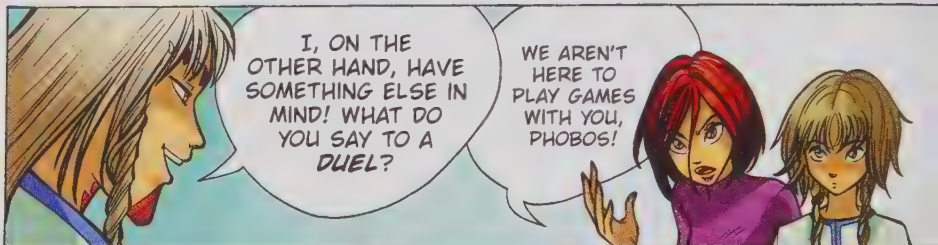
YES, BUT I REALLY MISS HEATHERFIELD SOMETIMES!





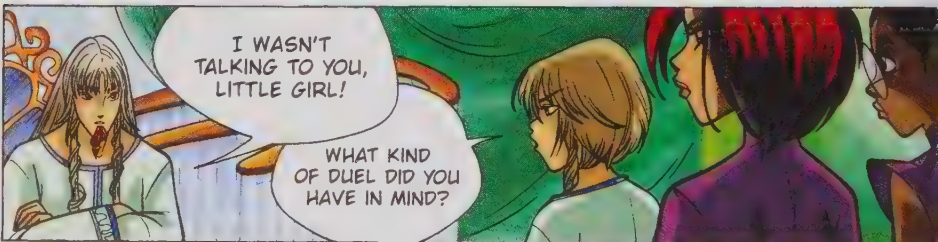
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU, PHOBOS! I JUST WANT ALL OF THIS MADNESS TO STOP! GIVE UP AND STAND TRIAL.

HMMM...
A TEMPTING
OFFER!



I, ON THE
OTHER HAND, HAVE
SOMETHING ELSE IN
MIND! WHAT DO
YOU SAY TO A
DUEL?

WE AREN'T
HERE TO
PLAY GAMES
WITH YOU,
PHOBOS!



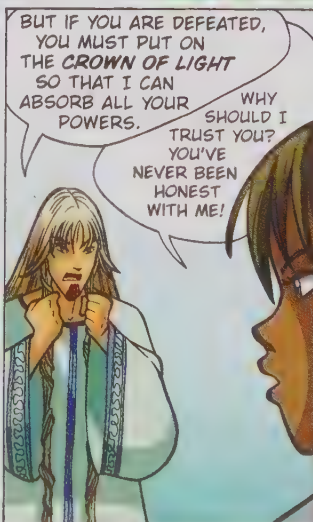
I WASN'T
TALKING TO YOU,
LITTLE GIRL!

WHAT KIND
OF DUEL DID YOU
HAVE IN MIND?



DON'T DO IT,
ELYON!

A BATTLE OF **MAGIC
POWERS** WITHOUT LIM-
ITATIONS! IF YOU WIN,
MERIDIAN WILL
BE YOURS.

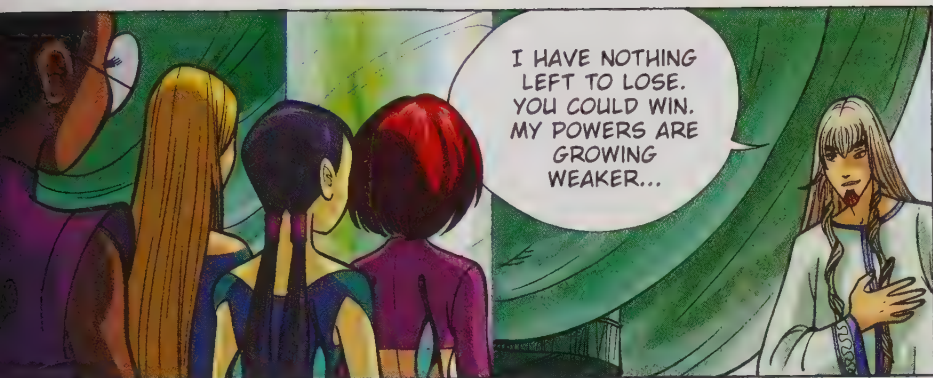


BUT IF YOU ARE DEFEATED,
YOU MUST PUT ON
THE **CROWN OF LIGHT**
SO THAT I CAN
ABSORB ALL YOUR
POWERS.

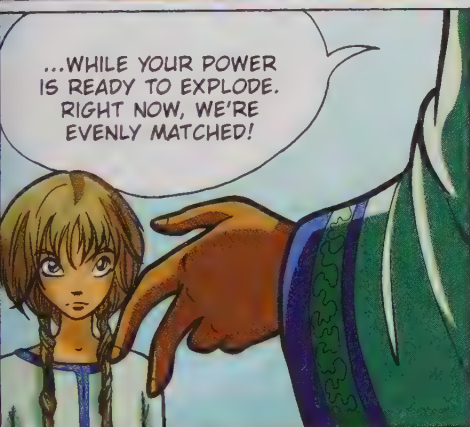
WHY
SHOULD I
TRUST YOU?
YOU'VE
NEVER BEEN
HONEST
WITH ME!



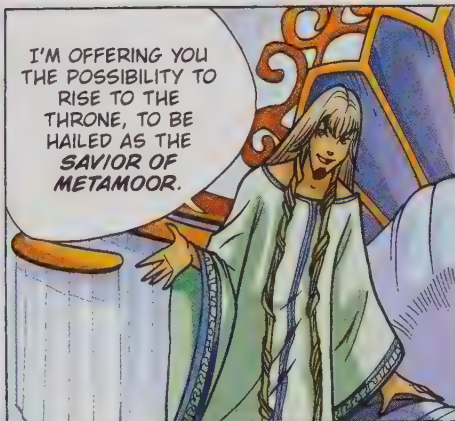
I WAS **WRONG** ABOUT YOU,
DEAR SISTER. HAD I JUST
ELIMINATED YOU QUICKLY, WE
WOULDN'T BE IN THIS MESS!



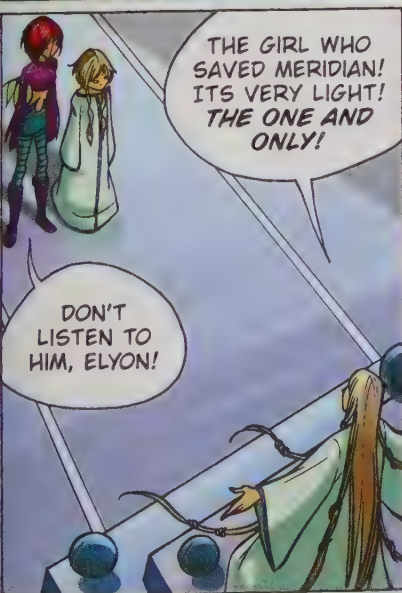
I HAVE NOTHING
LEFT TO LOSE.
YOU COULD WIN.
MY POWERS ARE
GROWING
WEAKER...



...WHILE YOUR POWER
IS READY TO EXPLODE.
RIGHT NOW, WE'RE
EVENLY MATCHED!

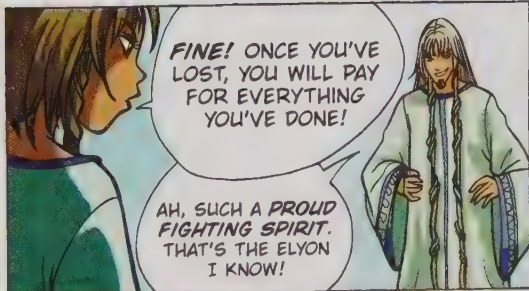


I'M OFFERING YOU
THE POSSIBILITY TO
RISE TO THE
THRONE, TO BE
HAILED AS THE
SAVIOR OF
METAMOOR.



THE GIRL WHO
SAVED MERIDIAN!
ITS VERY LIGHT!
THE ONE AND
ONLY!

DON'T
LISTEN TO
HIM, ELYON!



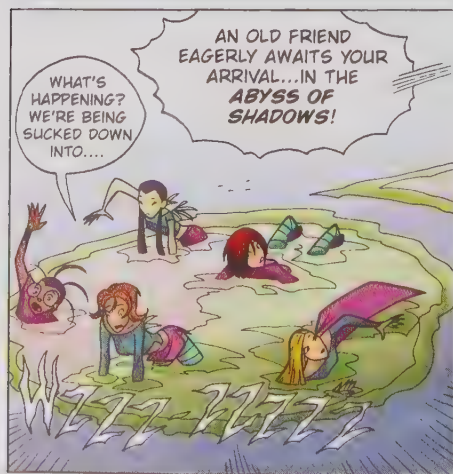
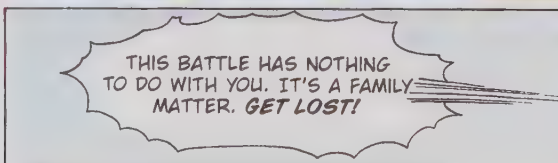
FINE! ONCE YOU'VE
LOST, YOU WILL PAY
FOR EVERYTHING
YOU'VE DONE!

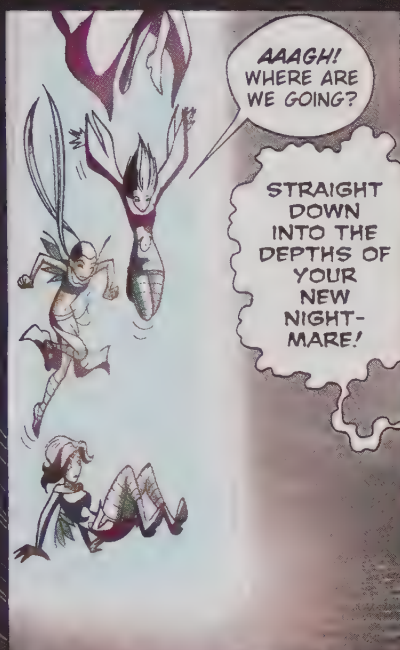
AH, SUCH A PROUD
FIGHTING SPIRIT.
THAT'S THE ELYON
I KNOW!



WILL!
We can't
just let
her
fight
him.

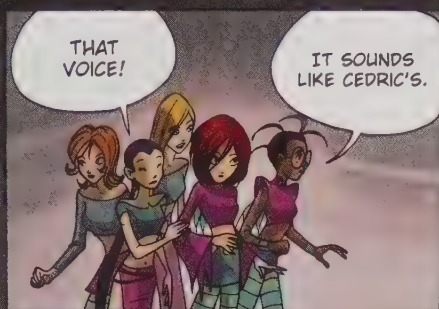
You're right.
When I give
the signal,
we'll attack
Phobos all
together.
Ready?





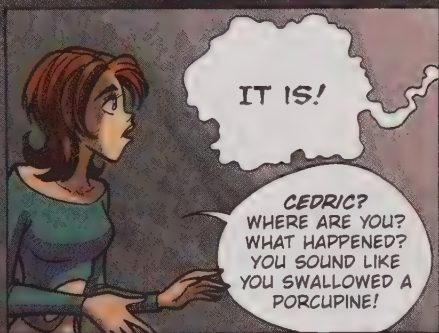
AAAGH!
WHERE ARE
WE GOING?

STRAIGHT
DOWN
INTO THE
DEPTHS OF
YOUR NEW
NIGHT-
MARE!



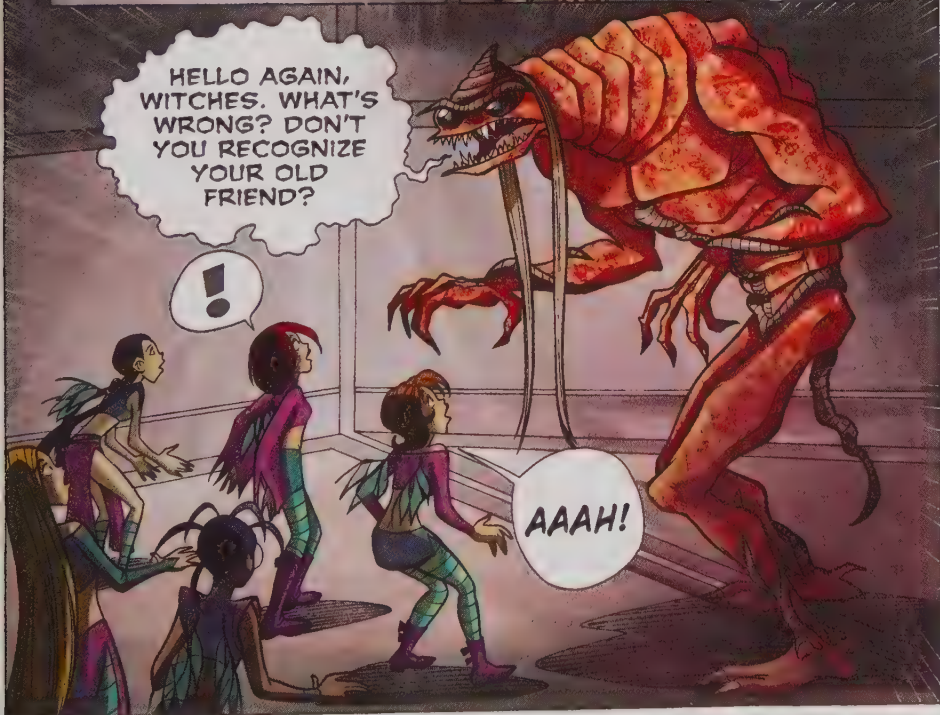
THAT
VOICE!

IT SOUNDS
LIKE CEDRIC'S.



IT IS!

CEDRIC?
WHERE ARE YOU?
WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU SOUND LIKE
YOU SWALLOWED A
PORCUPINE!



HELLO AGAIN,
WITCHES. WHAT'S
WRONG? DON'T
YOU RECOGNIZE
YOUR OLD
FRIEND?

AAAH!

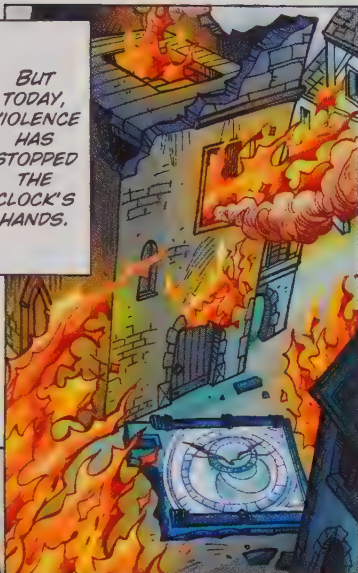
“That which was born
united, return to being
part of the whole!”



FOR CENTURIES,
THIS ETERNAL
CLOCK MARKED
THE PASSAGE OF
TIME IN
MERIDIAN...



BUT
TODAY,
VIOLENCE
HAS
STOPPED
THE
CLOCK'S
HANDS.



IF THAT CLOCK
COULD STRIKE
ONCE AGAIN...



...IT WOULD SIGNAL THE
HOUR OF TRUTH'S
ARRIVAL.

WE'LL SEE ABOUT
THAT, CEDRIC!

YOU CAN HIDE ALL
YOU WANT, INSOLENT
VERMIN, BUT YOU'LL
NEVER ESCAPE!



IS THAT A
CHALLENGE, LITTLE
WILL? IF SO, IT'S
ONE YOU'LL SOON
REGRET!

AHHH!

FEAR ME!
PRINCE
PHOBOS HAS
MADE ME
STRONGER
AND
FASTER!

RAAAA-
ARGH!

WZAK

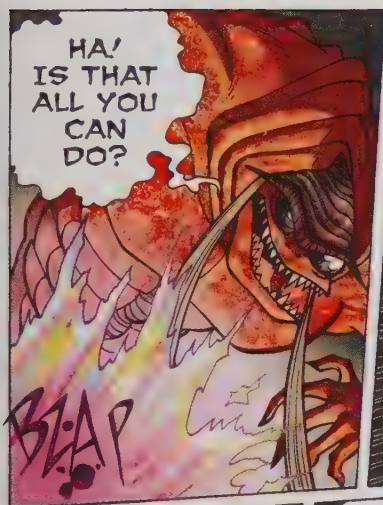
EVERY TIME,
THE SAME OLD
LINE! PRINCE
PHOBOS COULD'VE
AT LEAST GIVEN
YOU SOME
ORIGINALITY!

OOOH!

I DIDN'T ASK FOR A TRIM,
BUT THANKS FOR GETTING
RID OF MY SPLIT
ENDS!

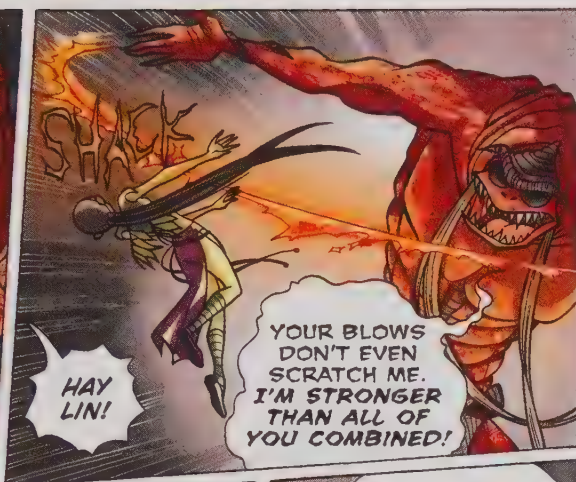
THE
GAME
IS OVER,
GIRLS!

YEAH, BUT IT'S
OVER FOR YOU,
CEDRIC!



HA!
IS THAT
ALL YOU
CAN
DO?

BLAP



HAY
LIN!

YOUR BLOWS
DON'T EVEN
SCRATCH ME.
I'M STRONGER
THAN ALL OF
YOU COMBINED!



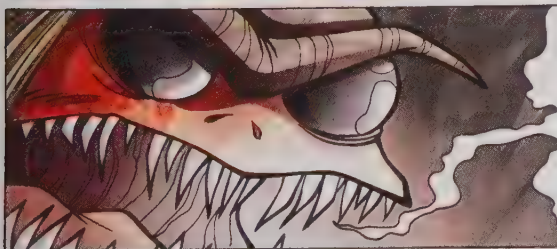
OW, MY HEAD. THAT
OVERGROWN BEAST
REALLY PACKS A
PUNCH...



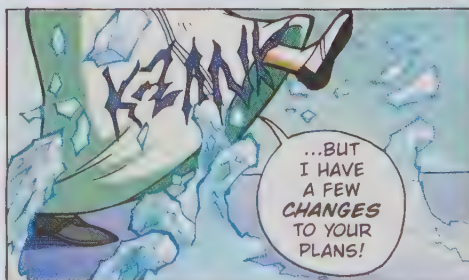
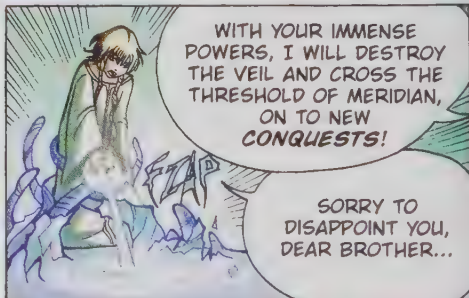
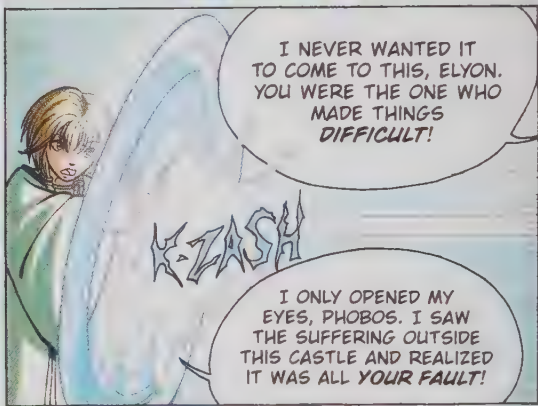
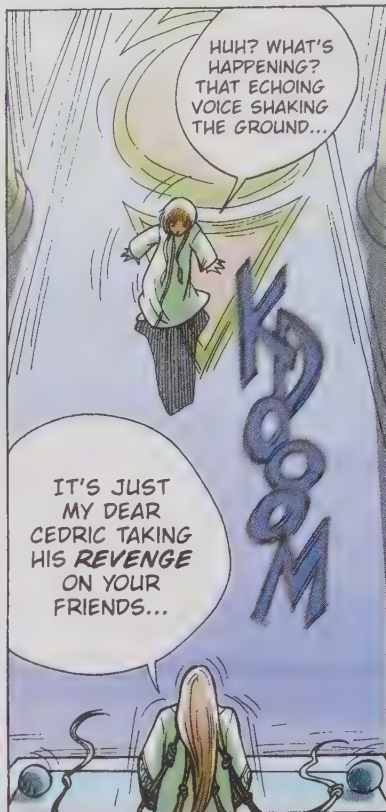
NO WAY! THAT'S
THE CROWN OF
LIGHT!

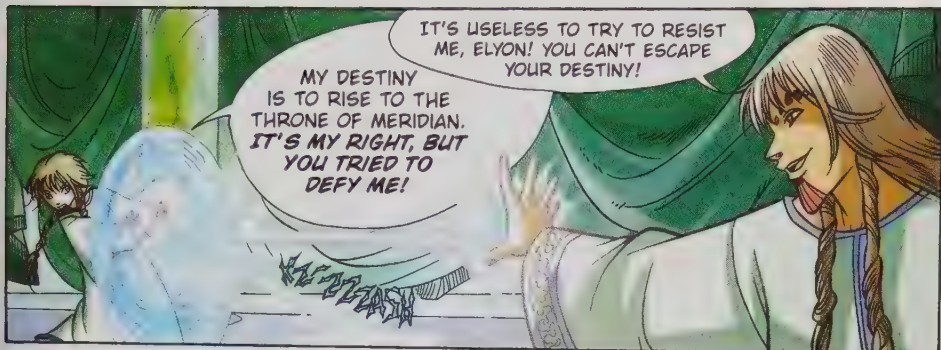


GUYS, TAKE
A LOOK AT
WHAT I FOUND!
IT'S ELYON'S
CROWN!



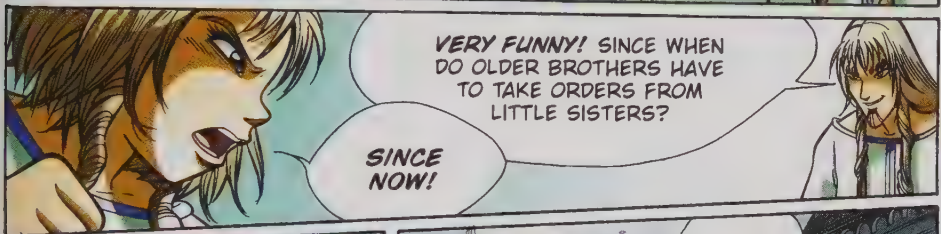
DON'T
TOUCH THAT!





MY DESTINY
IS TO RISE TO THE
THRONE OF MERIDIAN.
**IT'S MY RIGHT, BUT
YOU TRIED TO
DEFY ME!**

IT'S USELESS TO TRY TO RESIST
ME, ELYON! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE
YOUR DESTINY!

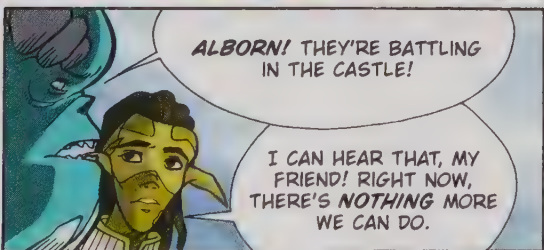


VERY FUNNY! SINCE WHEN
DO OLDER BROTHERS HAVE
TO TAKE ORDERS FROM
LITTLE SISTERS?

**SINCE
NOW!**

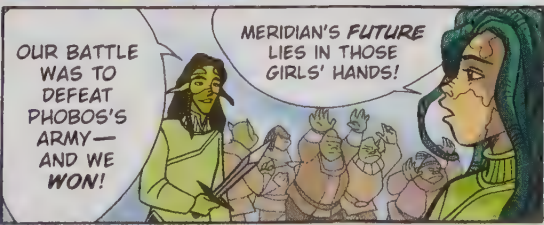


**MY
GOOD-
NESS!**



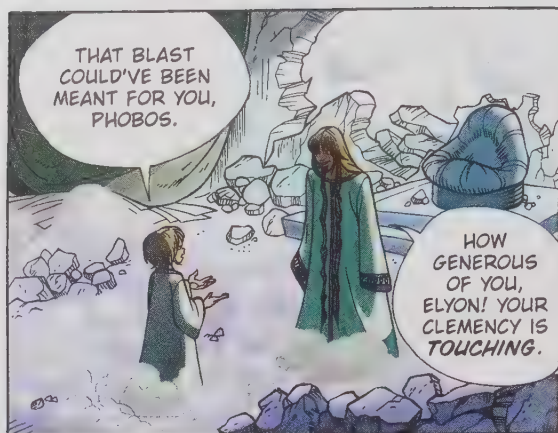
**ALBORN! THEY'RE BATTLING
IN THE CASTLE!**

I CAN HEAR THAT, MY
FRIEND! RIGHT NOW,
THERE'S **NOTHING** MORE
WE CAN DO.



OUR BATTLE
WAS TO
DEFEAT
PHOBOS'S
ARMY—
AND WE
WON!

MERIDIAN'S **FUTURE**
LIES IN THOSE
GIRLS' HANDS!



THAT BLAST
COULD'VE BEEN
MEANT FOR YOU,
PHOBOS.

HOW
GENEROUS
OF YOU,
ELYON! YOUR
CLEMENCY IS
TOUCHING.

LOYALTY AND
COMPASSION—THE
GENUINE SIGNS OF
TRUE NOBILITY!

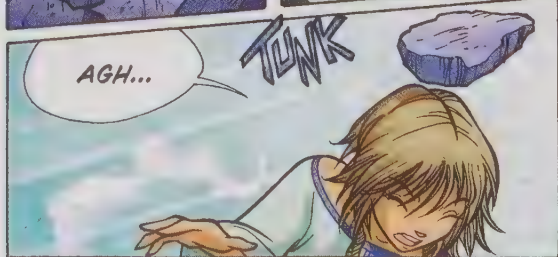


YOU
WOULD
HAVE
BEEN A
WONDER-
FUL
PRINCESS...



...HAD YOU NOT
BEEN SO **STUPID**
AS TO BE DUPED BY
MY WORDS!

HUH?

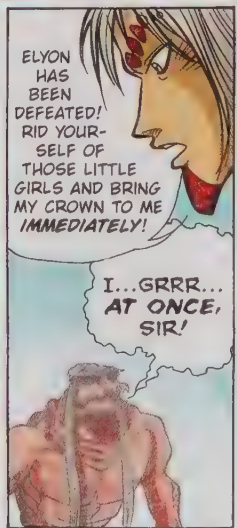
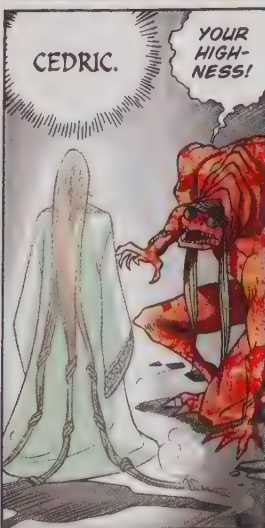
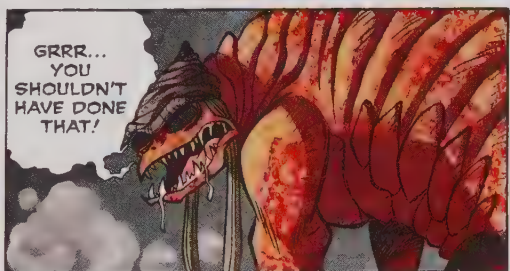
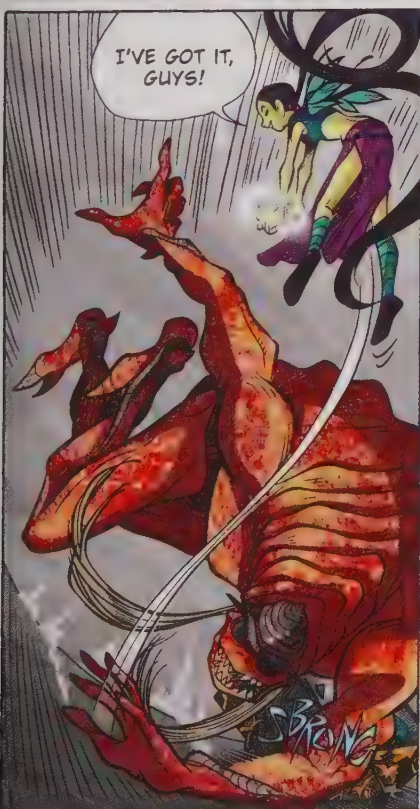


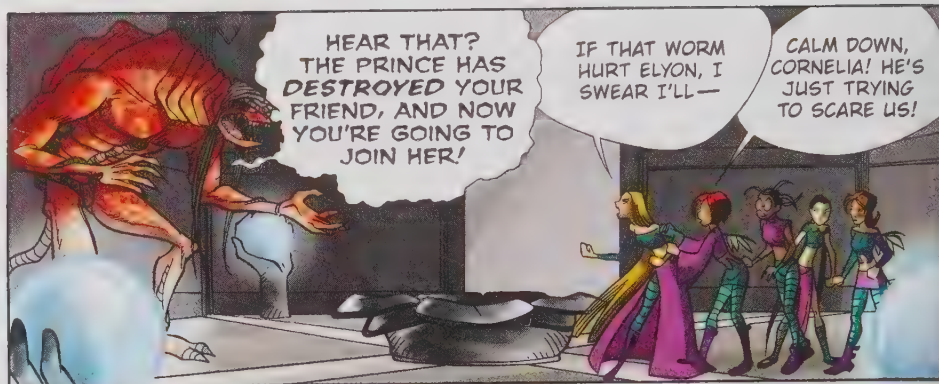
AGH...



OUR BATTLE ENDS
HERE, ELYON. YOU'VE
LOST!

"AS HAVE YOUR
DUMB FRIENDS!"

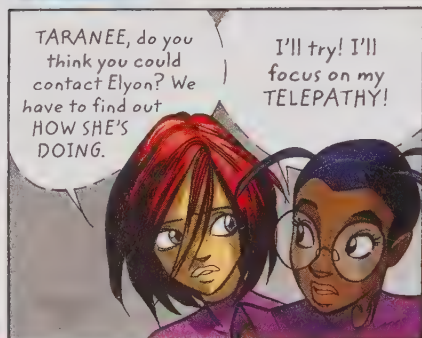




HEAR THAT?
THE PRINCE HAS
DESTROYED YOUR
FRIEND, AND NOW
YOU'RE GOING TO
JOIN HER!

IF THAT WORM
HURT ELYON, I
SWEAR I'LL—

CALM DOWN,
CORNELIA! HE'S
JUST TRYING
TO SCARE US!



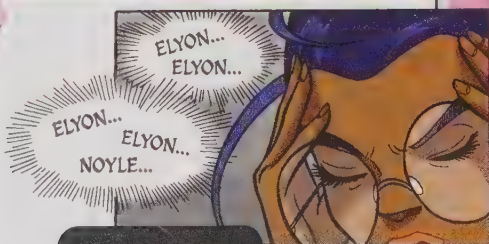
TARANEE, do you
think you could
contact Elyon? We
have to find out
HOW SHE'S
DOING.

I'll try! I'll
focus on my
TELEPATHY!



GREAT! IN THE
MEANTIME, WE'LL
KEEP CEDRIC
OCCUPIED!

COME
ON, GUYS!
LET'S TEACH
HIM A LESSON
HE'LL NEVER
FORGET!



ELYON...
ELYON...

ELYON...
ELYON...
NOYLE...

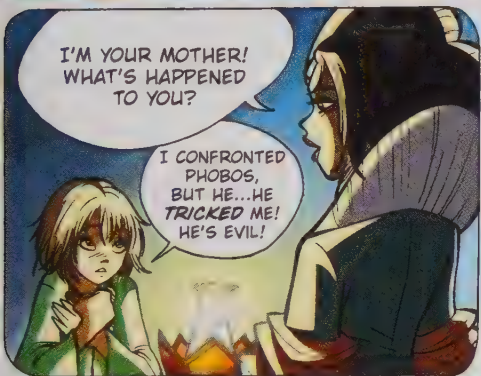
ELYON, WHERE
ARE YOU?

IS—
IS ANYONE
THERE? CAN
ANYBODY
HEAR ME?



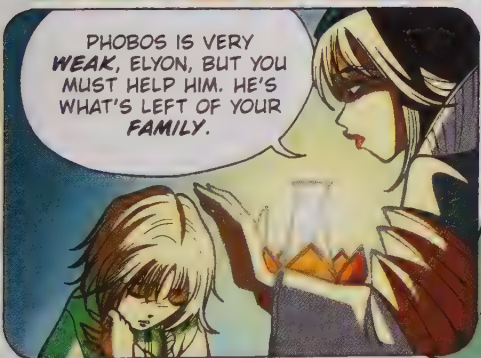


TH-THERE'S
A LIGHT AHEAD.
MAYBE I'M
SAVED!

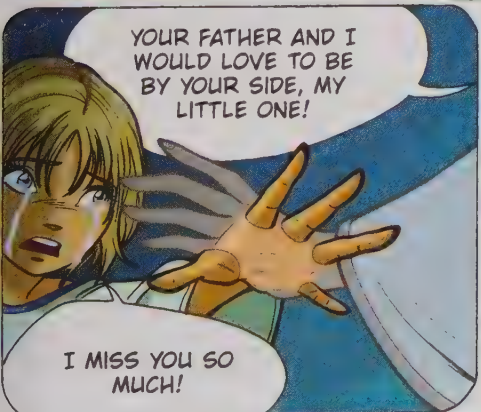


I'M YOUR MOTHER!
WHAT'S HAPPENED
TO YOU?

I CONFRONTED
PHOBOS,
BUT HE...HE
TRICKED ME!
HE'S EVIL!

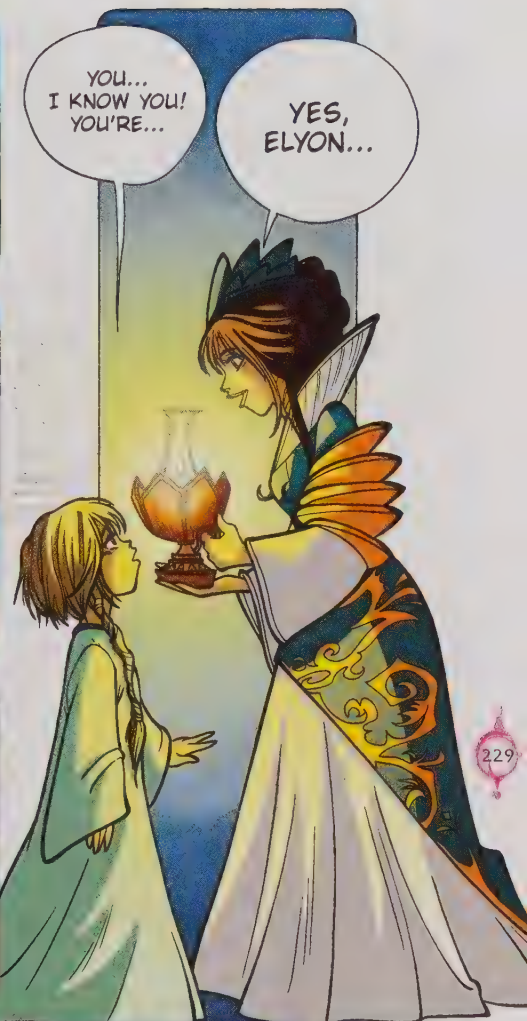


PHOBOS IS VERY
WEAK, ELYON, BUT YOU
MUST HELP HIM. HE'S
WHAT'S LEFT OF YOUR
FAMILY.



YOUR FATHER AND I
WOULD LOVE TO BE
BY YOUR SIDE, MY
LITTLE ONE!

I MISS YOU SO
MUCH!

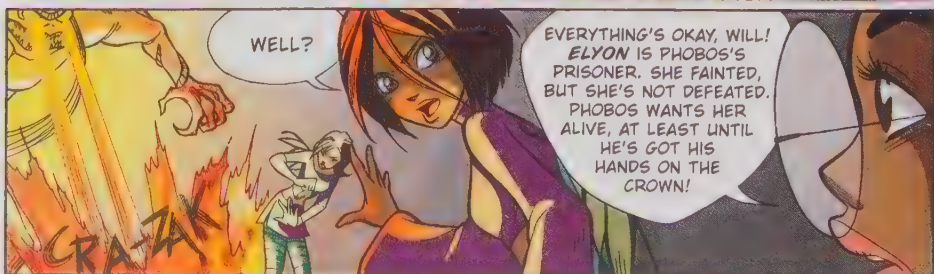
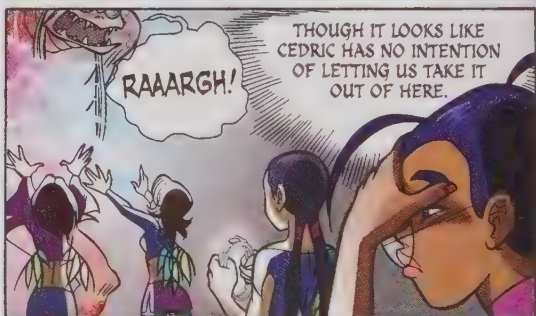
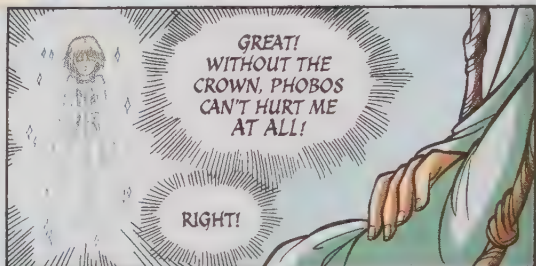
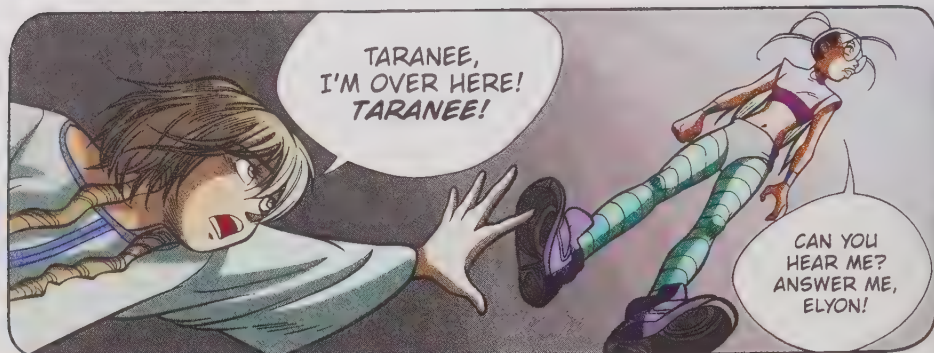


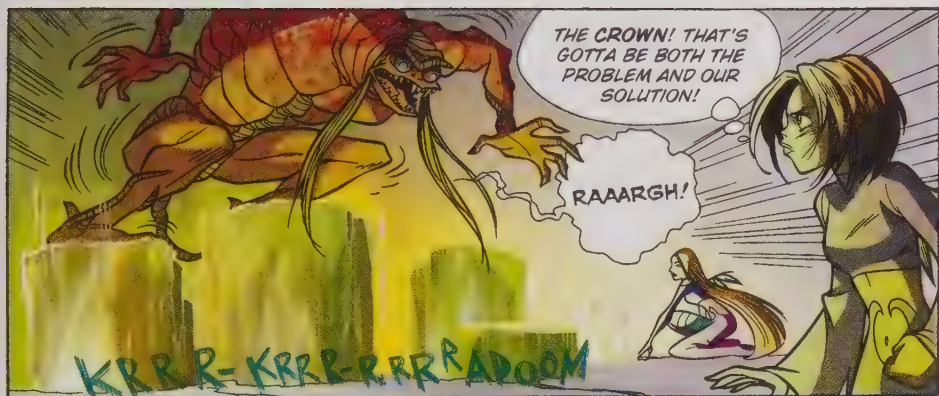
YOU...
I KNOW YOU!
YOU'RE...

YES,
ELYON...



ELYON!

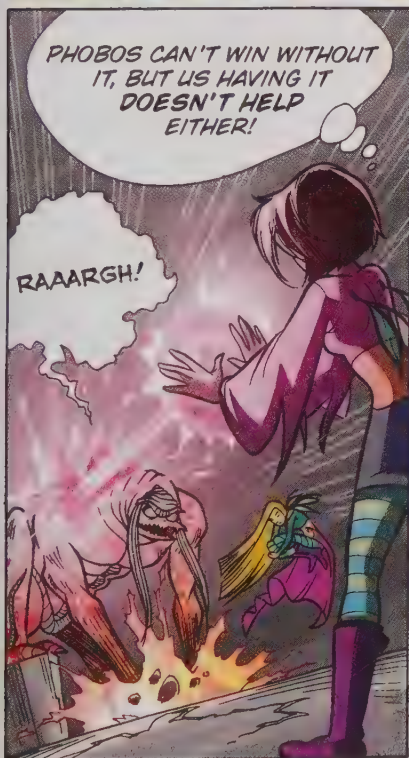




THE CROWN! THAT'S GOTTA BE BOTH THE PROBLEM AND OUR SOLUTION!

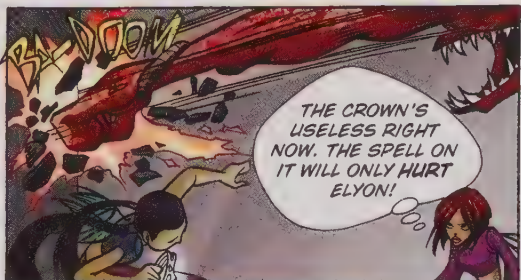
RAAARGH!

KRRR-KRRR-KRRRADOOM

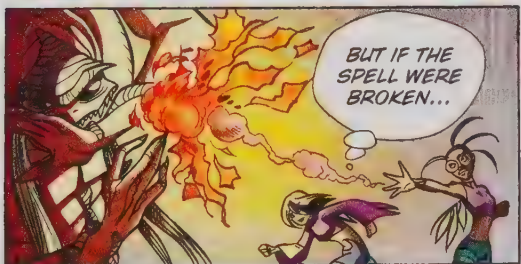


PHOBOS CAN'T WIN WITHOUT IT, BUT US HAVING IT DOESN'T HELP EITHER!

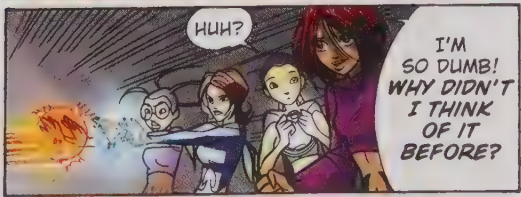
RAAARGH!



THE CROWN'S USELESS RIGHT NOW. THE SPELL ON IT WILL ONLY HURT ELYON!

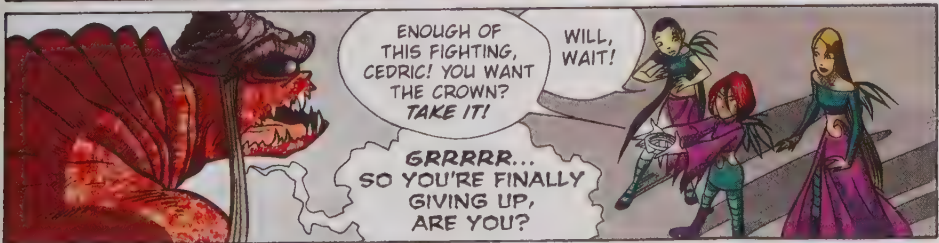


BUT IF THE SPELL WERE BROKEN...



HUH?

I'M SO DUMB! WHY DIDN'T I THINK OF IT BEFORE?



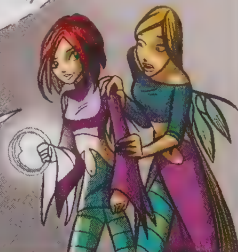
ENOUGH OF THIS FIGHTING, CEDRIC! YOU WANT THE CROWN? TAKE IT!

WILL, WAIT!

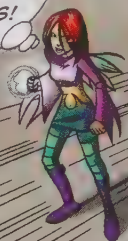
GRRRRR... SO YOU'RE FINALLY GIVING UP, ARE YOU?

Will, what are you doing?
You're not really going to
give him the crown,
are you?

I know what
I'm doing,
Cornelia.
Trust me!

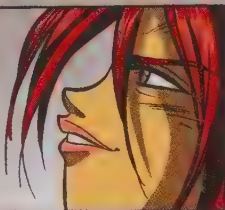


I JUST HOPE
THIS WORKS!



THE CROWN,
WILL! GRRRR!

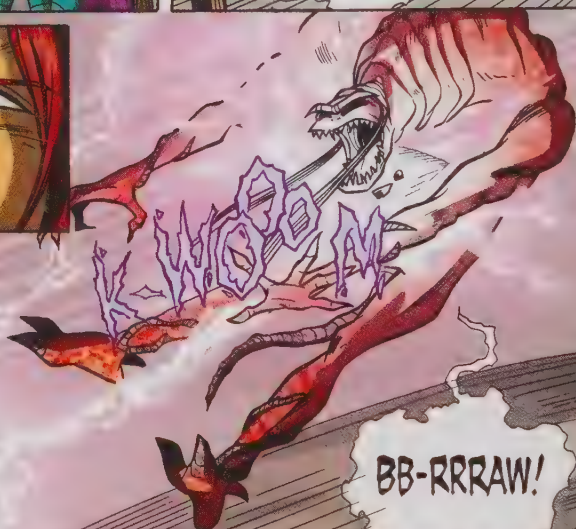
SURE,
CEDRIC.
COME AND
GET IT!



I'D
BE HAPPY
TO GIVE IT
TO YOU!



BB-RRRAW!



YOU UNDERHANDED LITTLE *SNAKE*!
YOU'RE NOT FIGHTING FAIR!



FLANK

DON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT
MANNERS! YOU'RE NOT SO
GREAT EITHER!



RAAARGH!

AS THE CROWN COMES INTO CONTACT WITH CEDRIC, IT RELEASES THE EVIL EFFECTS THAT PHOBOS INFUSED WITH HIS SPELL...

YAAAARGH!

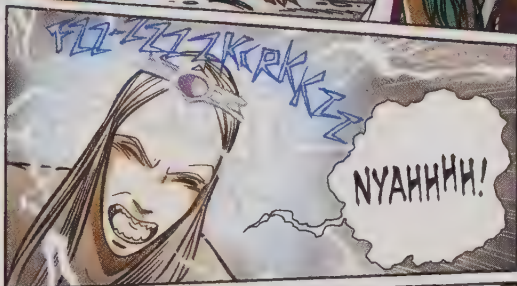
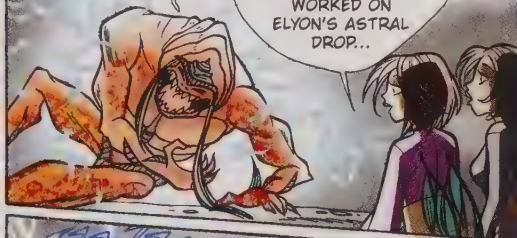


I DID IT!

RAAARGH!

YEAH...BUT WHAT DID YOU DO?

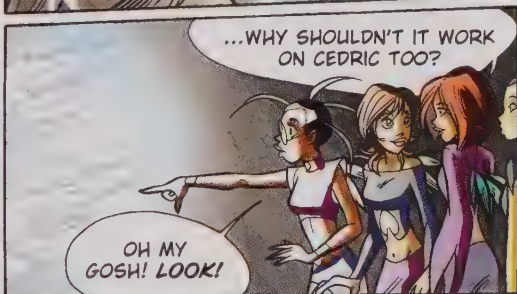
THAT CROWN **ABSORBS** POWERS! SO I THOUGHT, IF IT WORKED ON ELYON'S ASTRAL DROP...



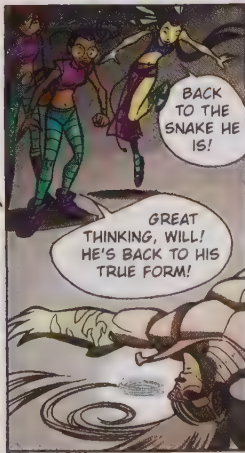
NYAHHHH!

...WHY SHOULDN'T IT WORK ON CEDRIC TOO?

OH MY GOSH! LOOK!



OHHH!



BACK TO THE SNAKE HE IS!

GREAT THINKING, WILL! HE'S BACK TO HIS TRUE FORM!

THE JERK'S OUT COLD.

IT'S NOT OVER
YET! PHOBOS'S
SPELL IS STILL
AFFECTING THE
CROWN...

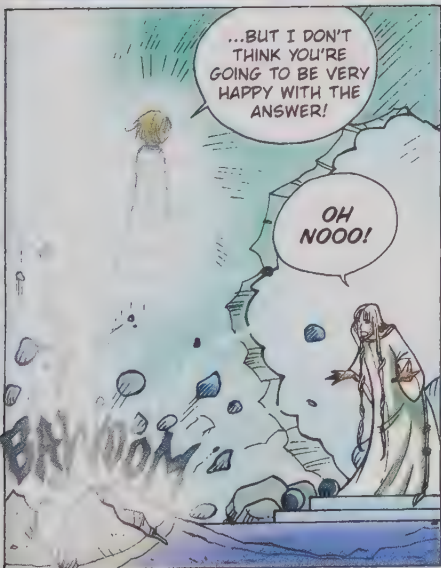
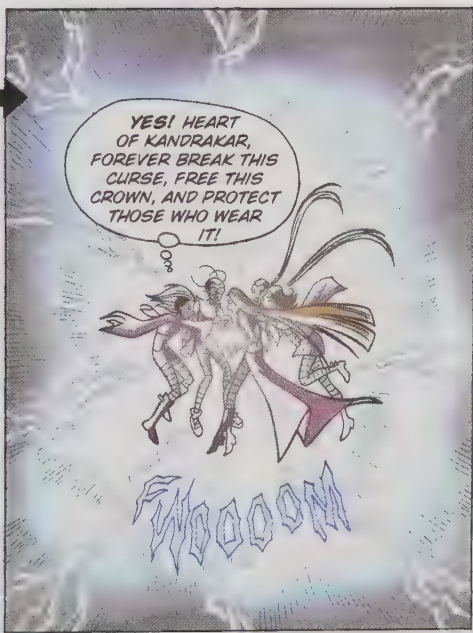
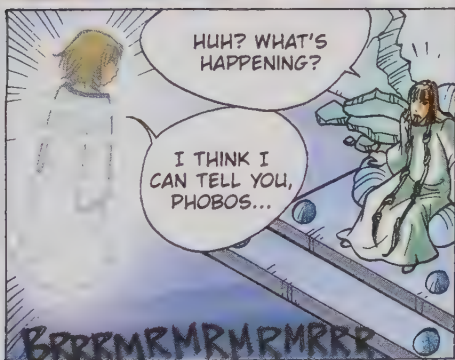
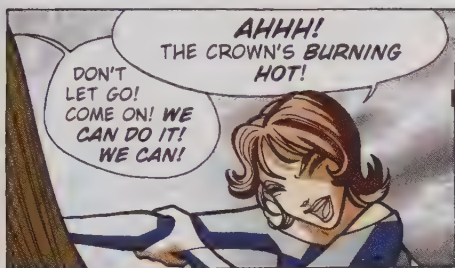
THERE'S
ONLY **ONE**
WAY TO
DESTROY
IT.

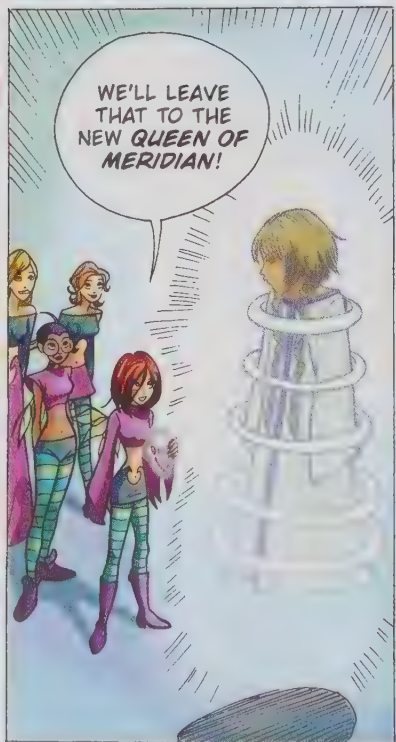
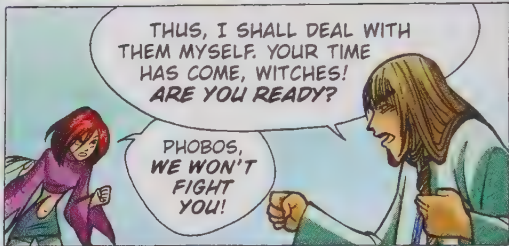
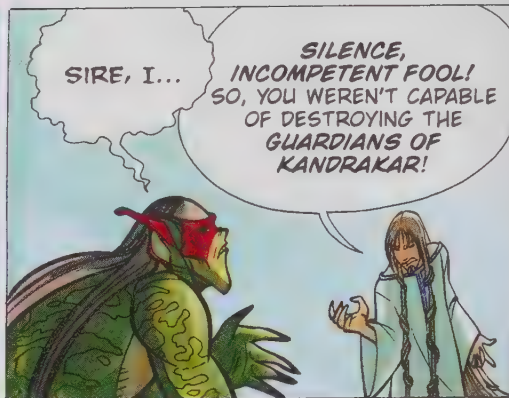
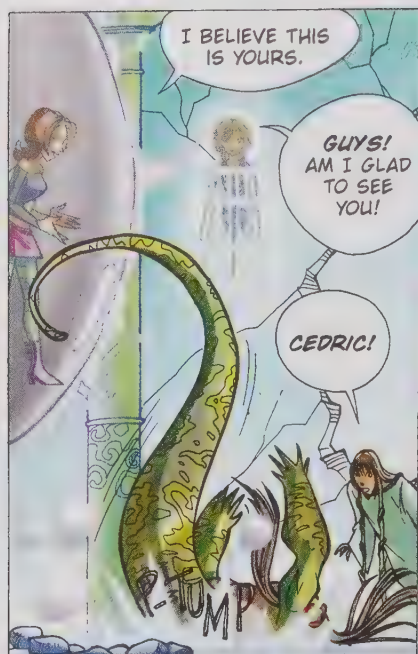
FOCUS YOUR
POWERS LIKE
NEVER BEFORE!
THE HEART OF
KANDRAKAR
HAS **DEFEATED**
PHOBOS
BEFORE...

...AND IT'LL DO IT
AGAIN! **NOW!**

ONE AFTER THE
OTHER, THE FIVE
GIRLS CHANNEL
THEIR POWERS
INTO THE CROWN.

SLOWLY BUT SURELY, SOMETHING
INCREDIBLE STARTS TO HAPPEN!





NEITHER WORDS NOR
SOUNDS CAN DESCRIBE
WHAT HAPPENED.

THE CROWN AND ITS RIGHTFUL
BEARER UNITE IN A BURST
OF ABSOLUTE POWER.

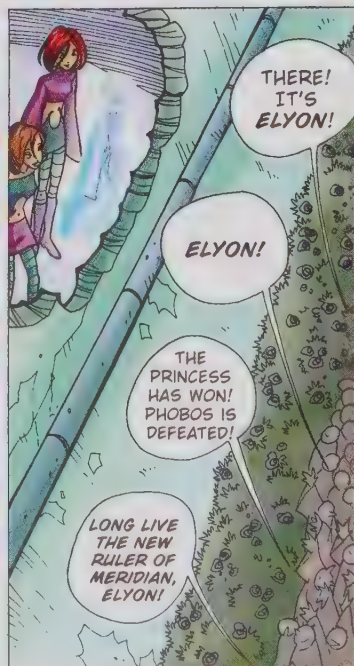
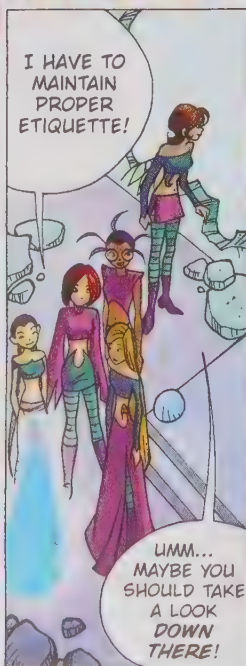
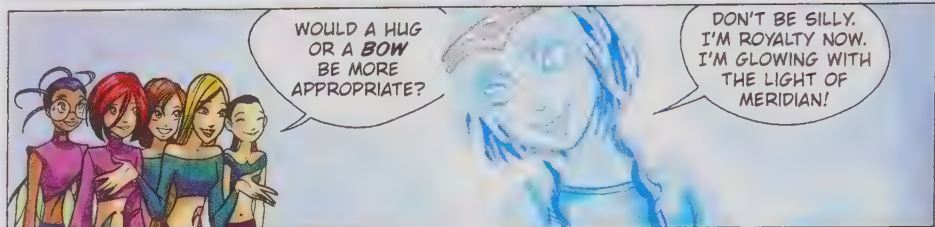
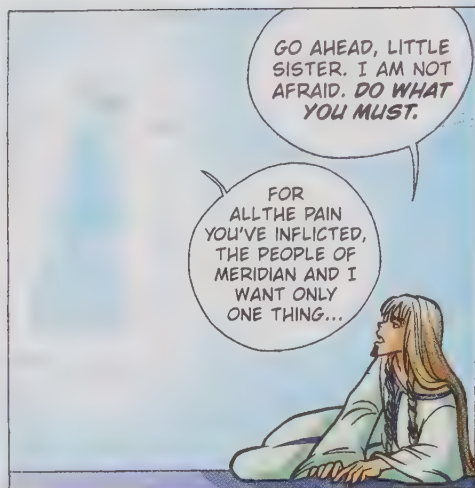
THE DARKNESS DISSOLVES,
AND A NEW DAY BEGINS.

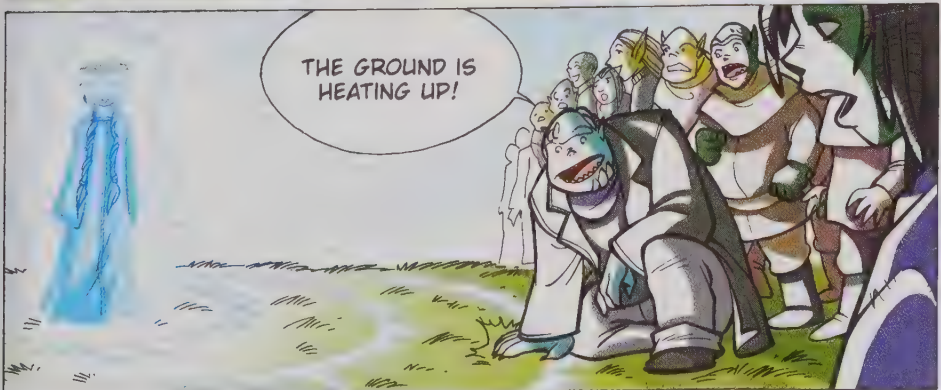
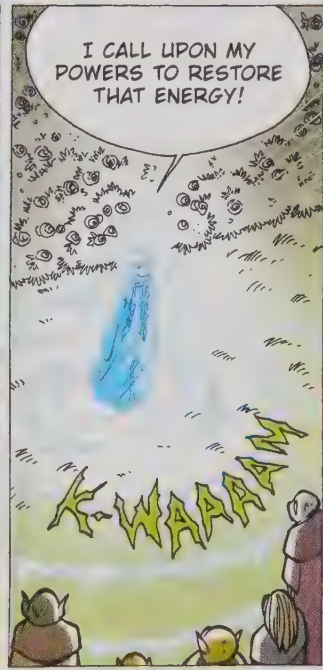
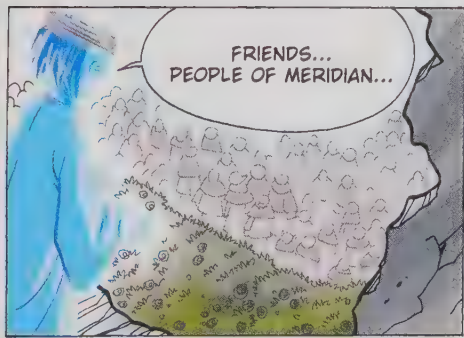
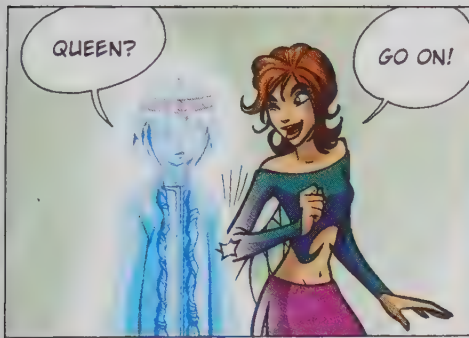
WHAT PHOBOS
HAS ALWAYS
FEARED...

THE LIGHT OF MERIDIAN
SHINES ONCE MORE.

WHAT THE PEOPLE
OF METAMOOR HAVE
ALWAYS WANTED...

AND NO ONE WILL
EXTINGUISH IT AGAIN.

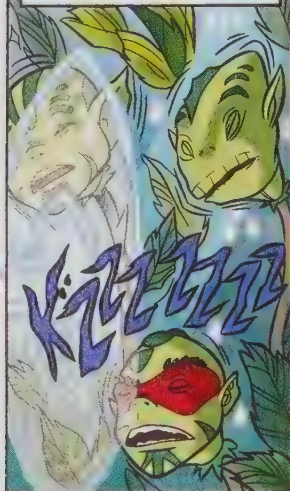




MAY EVIL
DISAPPEAR
FROM THIS
WORLD! MAY
EACH OF
PHOBOS'S
SPELLS
BE REMOVED!
MAY MERIDIAN
SPRING BACK
TO LIFE!



NOTHING RESISTS ELYON'S
ORDERS— NOT EVEN A SINGLE
HEDGE OF BLACK ROSES. THE
WALLS OF THE FLOWERY CAGE
BUST OPEN...



...AS THE TIME HAS COME
FOR ITS PRISONERS TO BE
SET FREE!



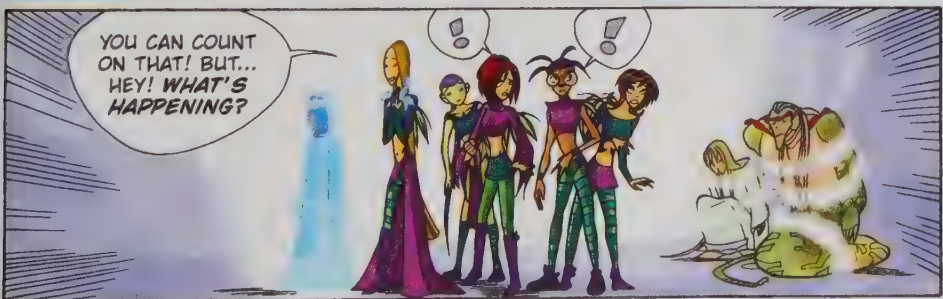
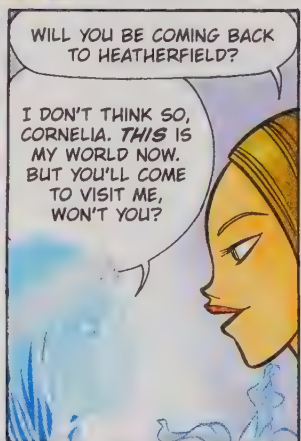
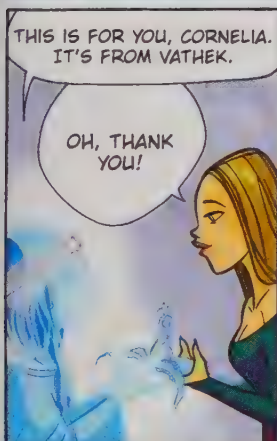
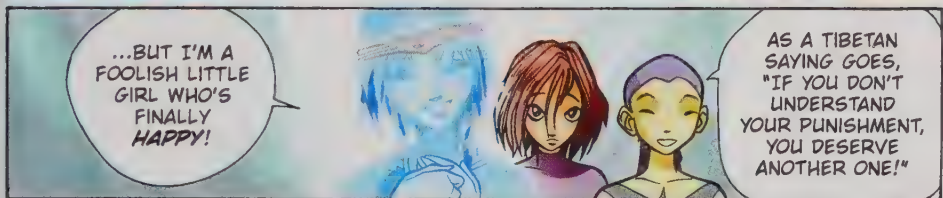
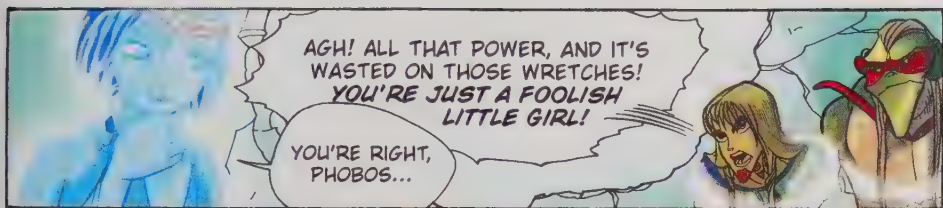
MERIDIAN COMES
BACK TO LIFE.



DALTAR!

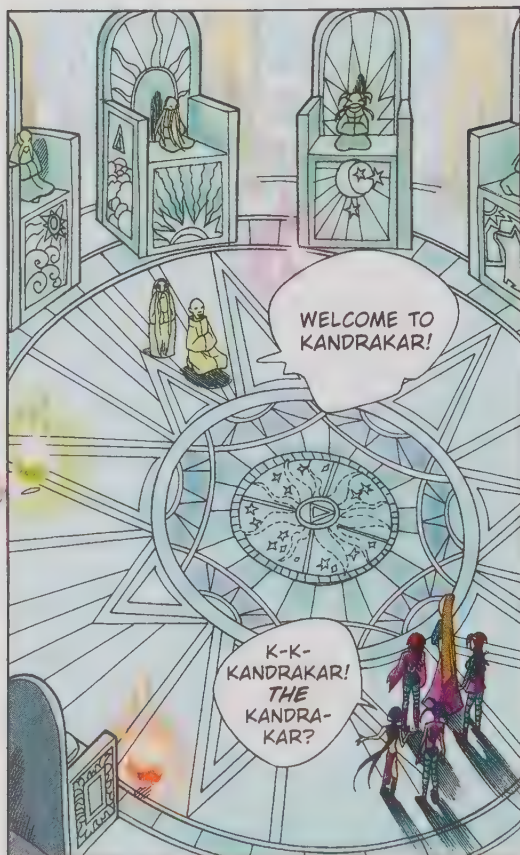
DADDY!

THE FUTURE BEGINS HERE.



YOU HAVE
COMPLETED
YOUR TASK,
GUARDIANS!

HUH?
WHERE THE HECK
ARE WE?



WELCOME TO
KANDRAKAR!

K-K-
KANDRAKAR!
THE
KANDRA-
KAR?

DO YOU KNOW A
DIFFERENT ONE?

You always
make the best
first impression.



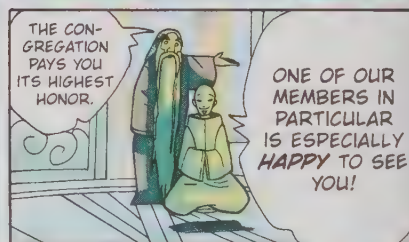
I AM THE ORACLE, AND I AM
SO PLEASED TO FINALLY
MEET YOU.

Hey, this
hippie's not
too
shabby!



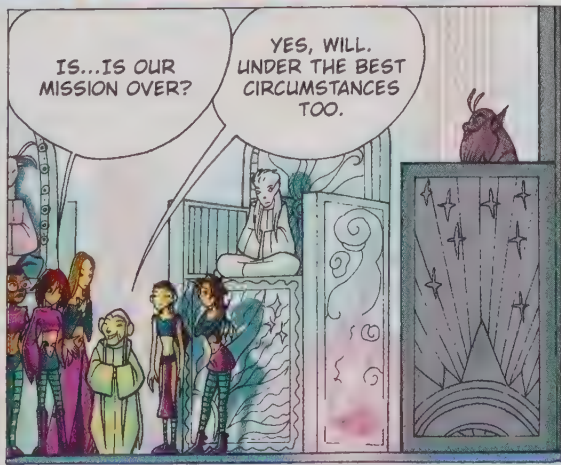
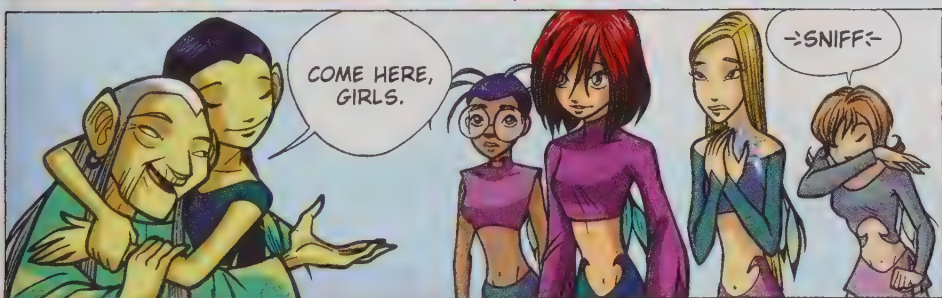
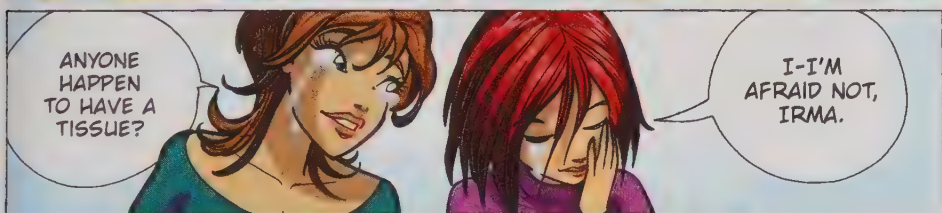
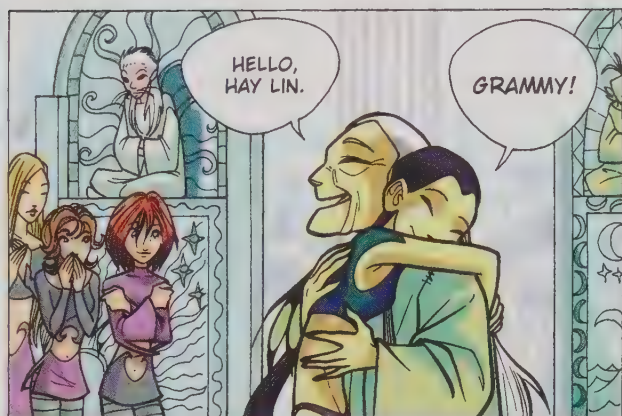
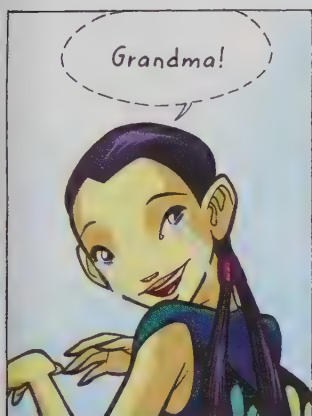
THE CON-
GREGATION
PAYS YOU
ITS HIGHEST
HONOR.

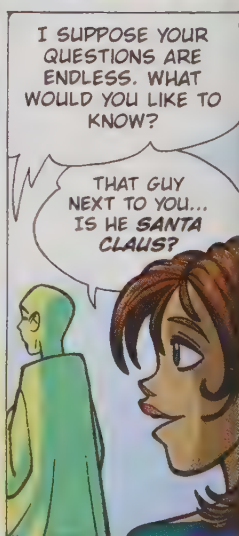
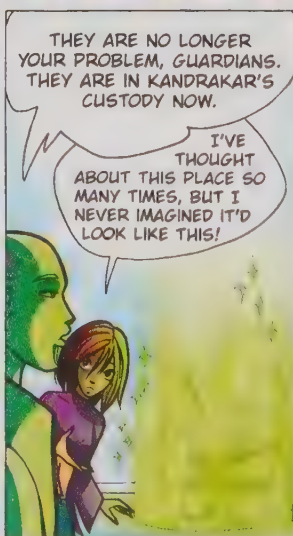
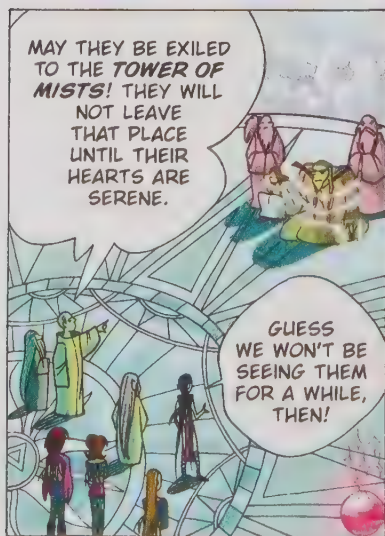
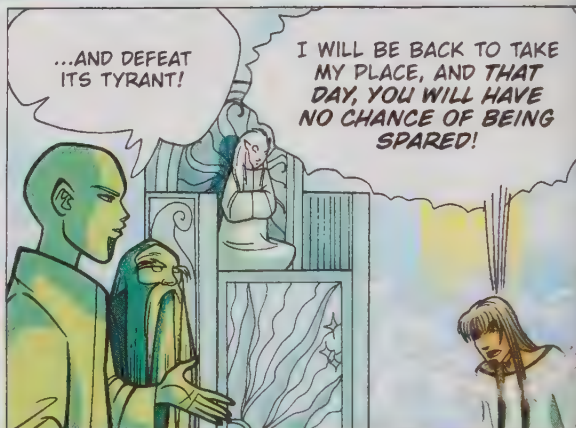
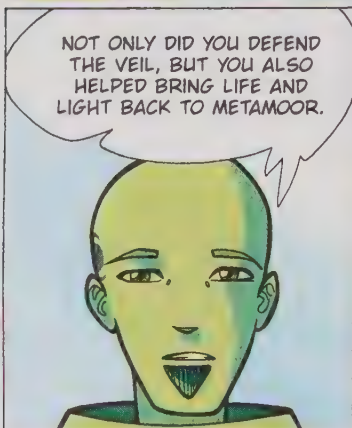
ONE OF OUR
MEMBERS IN
PARTICULAR
IS ESPECIALLY
HAPPY TO SEE
YOU!

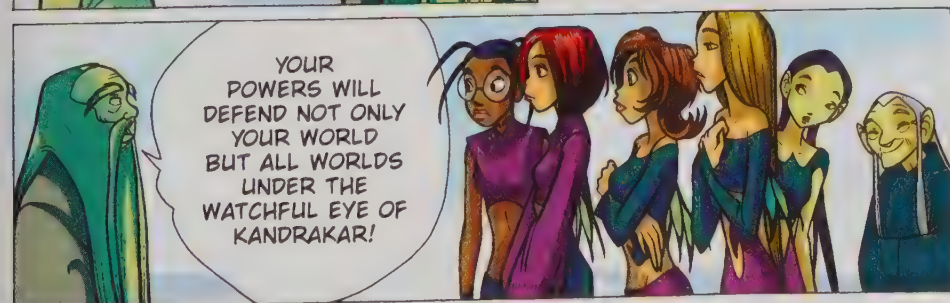
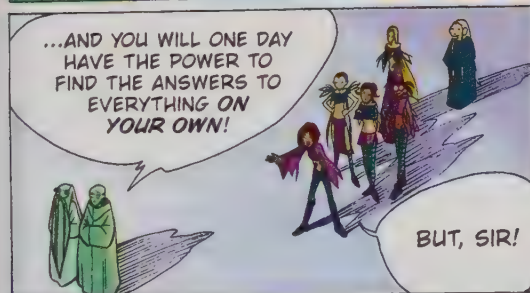
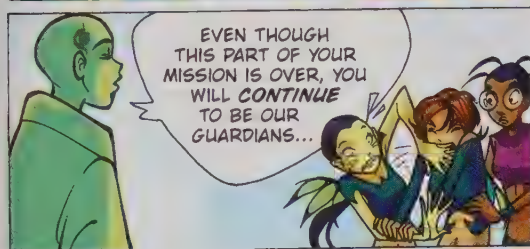
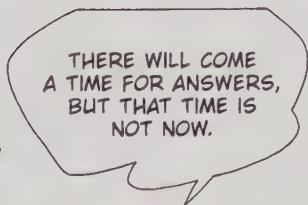
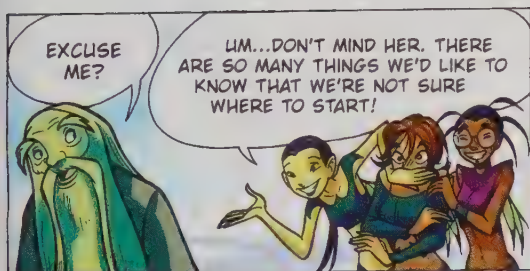


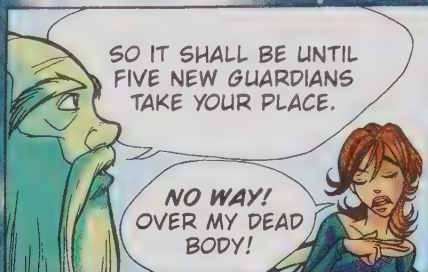
HI,
CUPCAKE!





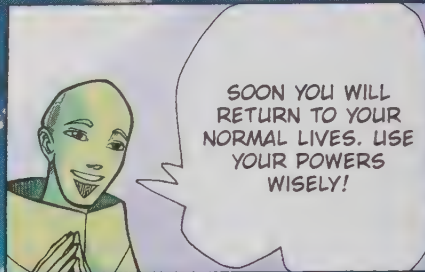




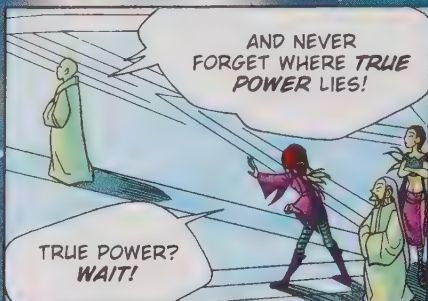


SO IT SHALL BE UNTIL
FIVE NEW GUARDIANS
TAKE YOUR PLACE.

NO WAY!
OVER MY DEAD
BODY!

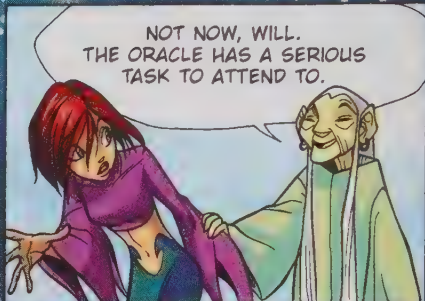


SOON YOU WILL
RETURN TO YOUR
NORMAL LIVES. USE
YOUR POWERS
WISELY!



AND NEVER
FORGET WHERE **TRUE**
POWER LIES!

TRUE POWER?
WAIT!



NOT NOW, WILL.
THE ORACLE HAS A SERIOUS
TASK TO ATTEND TO.



WHAT'S HE
DOING?

HE'S ABOUT TO BRING DOWN
THE **VEIL** THAT SEPARATES
MERIDIAN FROM THE REST
OF THE KNOWN WORLDS.
THIS IS A SERIOUS
MOMENT FOR ALL
OF US.



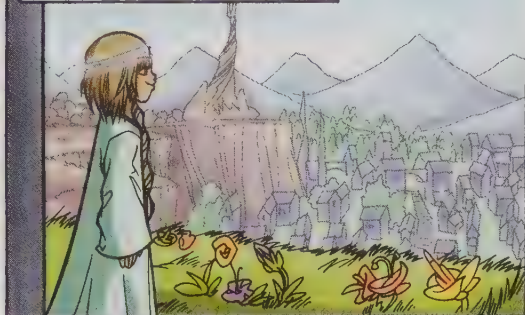
NOW THAT THE THREAT
OF PHOBOS IS GONE, WE HAVE
NO REASON TO KEEP THE
BARRIER!



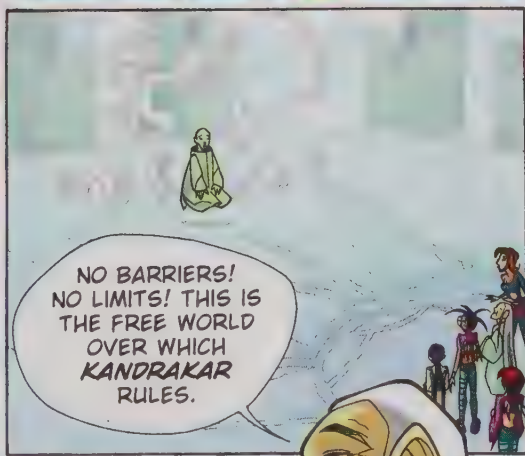
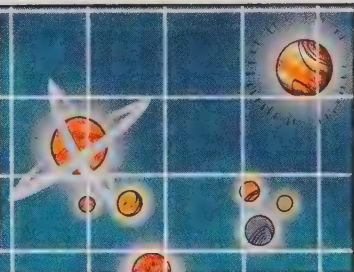
THAT WHICH WAS
BORN TO BE UNITED,
RETURN TO BEING A PART
OF THE WHOLE!

**BY MY COMMAND,
MAY THE VEIL CEASE
TO EXIST!**

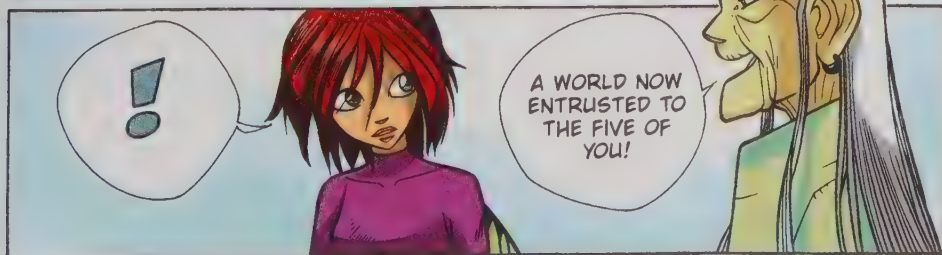
A UNIVERSE AWAY, ON META-
MOOR, NO ONE NOTICES...



YET THOSE
WHO CARE
TO LOOK
REALIZE
THAT
NOTHING
WILL EVER
BE THE
SAME...

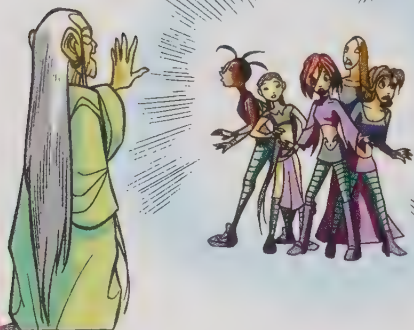


NO BARRIERS!
NO LIMITS! THIS IS
THE FREE WORLD
OVER WHICH
KANDRAKAR
RULES.

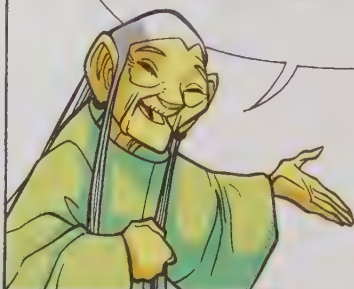


A WORLD NOW
ENTRUSTED TO
THE FIVE OF
YOU!

GIRLS, WE'LL
MEET AGAIN! WITH THE
HEART OF KANDRAKAR, YOU
CAN RETURN *WHENEVER*
YOU WISH.



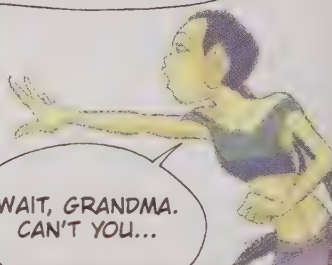
THIS IS YOUR SECOND HOME.
THIS IS THE PASSAGEWAY TO
EVERY OTHER PLACE!



FAREWELL AND HAVE NO FEAR!
NEVER, EVER BE AFRAID.



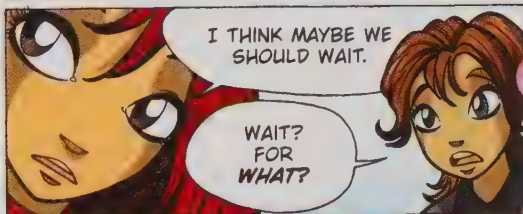
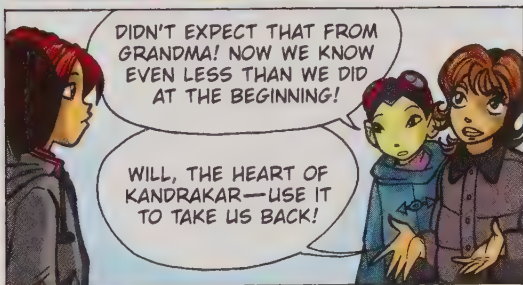
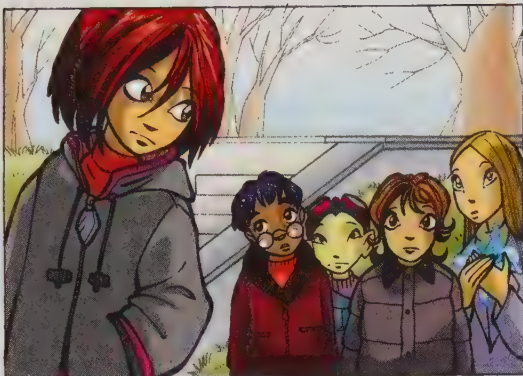
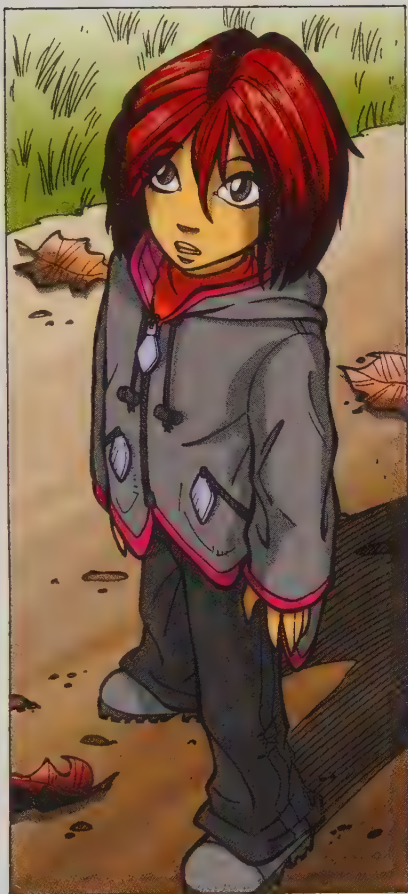
WAIT, GRANDMA.
CAN'T YOU...

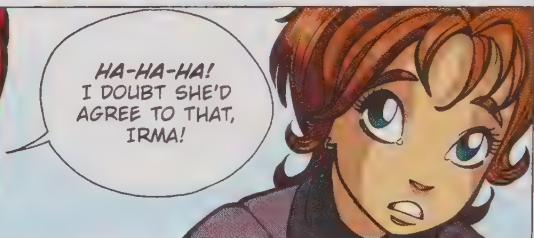
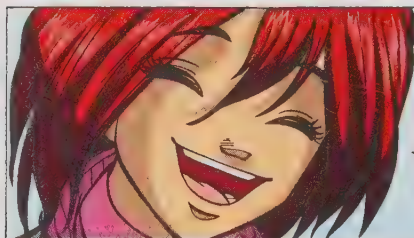
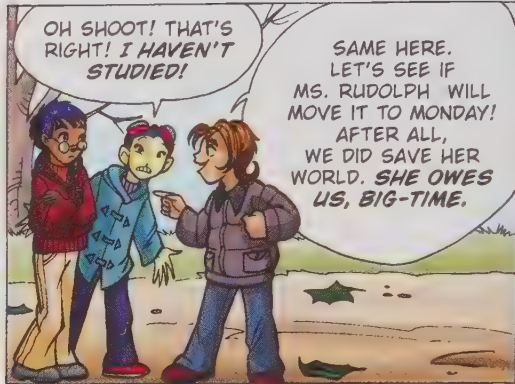


...TELL US
MORE?

IN A HEARTBEAT,
IT'S ALL OVER.







END OF
CHAPTER 12



Read on in Volume 4!

ASTONISHED BY...

Elyon

Almost **14** years old, Scorpio,
born **October 31**

She was **Cornelia's best friend** until she encountered

Cedric and suddenly went to
Metamoor. Since then, she has split
with the other girls and has become
the worst enemy of the Guardians
of Kandrakar.

From Cedric, she learned the people of
Metamoor expected her to become the
Light of Meridian, future ruler of
that realm where the female offspring of the
royal line become sovereign. Her brother,
Phobos, is the regent in the interim
and is looking forward to Elyon's rule
(according to Cedric).

Elyon uses **negative" magical powers**. They have nothing to do with
nature, but they come from the energy of the
world and control matter.



ASTONISHED BY...

Phobos

Elyon's older brother.

After the disappearance of his parents, the sovereigns of Meridian, he takes his place on the throne, which should rightfully belong to his sister.

Thirsty for power, Prince Phobos has kept **Meridian on its knees** by absorbing the land's magical energy.

To keep his ambition in check, Kandrakar's Congregation of Wise Men erected the **Wall** around the kingdom.

Ruthless and haughty, Phobos reveals himself through the **Murmurers**, a faithful court of his own creation.

He has a dream—to absorb Elyon's endless magical energy and destroy the Wall, allowing him to return to conquering other worlds and dimensions.



ASTONISHED BY...

Cedric

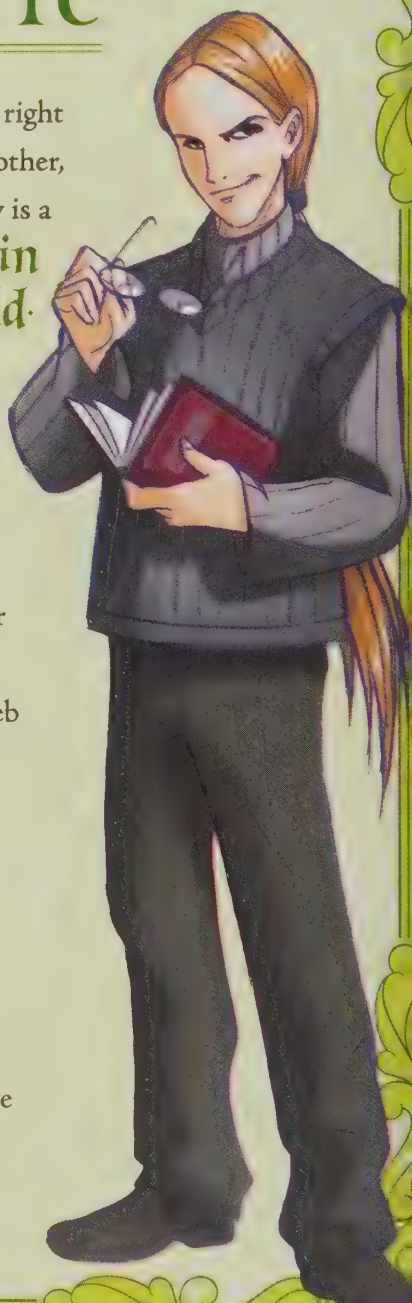
Prince Phobos's right
hand man. His other,
human identity is a
**bookseller in
Heatherfield.**

He's one of the
monstrous, faithful
assistants to Phobos.

His **antique bookstore,**
Ye Olde Book Shop, was the cover for
Elyon's investigations with his aide
Vathek (who then partnered with Caleb
as part of the Meridian rebels).

Like every Metamoor
resident, Cedric can change
his appearance; he's actually
"reptilian."

His only ambition is to be a part of the
Court of Murmurers,
reporting to the Prince of Meridian.





ASTONISHED BY...

Caleb

Caleb is the young leader of the **Rebels of Meridian**, a clandestine organization seeking the end to Prince Phobos's reign. Its base (also used for other people revolting) lies in the city's infinite underground.

His faithful lieutenant is **Vathek**, who, upon leaving Cedric's loyalty, has completely converted to the rebels' cause.

Born as a Murmurer,

Caleb developed a will and a conscience that led him to rebel against the control of his creator, Phobos.

Caleb is the love of **Cornelia's** dreams. The future of their love is still up in the air...



Part I. The Twelve Portals • Volume 3



Series Created by Elisabetta Gnone

Comic Art Direction: Alessandro Barbucci, Barbara Canepa

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The Power of Five

The final confrontation is at hand, and the girls must find a way to take down the evil Prince Phobos and reclaim the crown of Meridian! Who will emerge victorious in the showdown between light and darkness??



Cornelio



Hay Lin

Taranee

